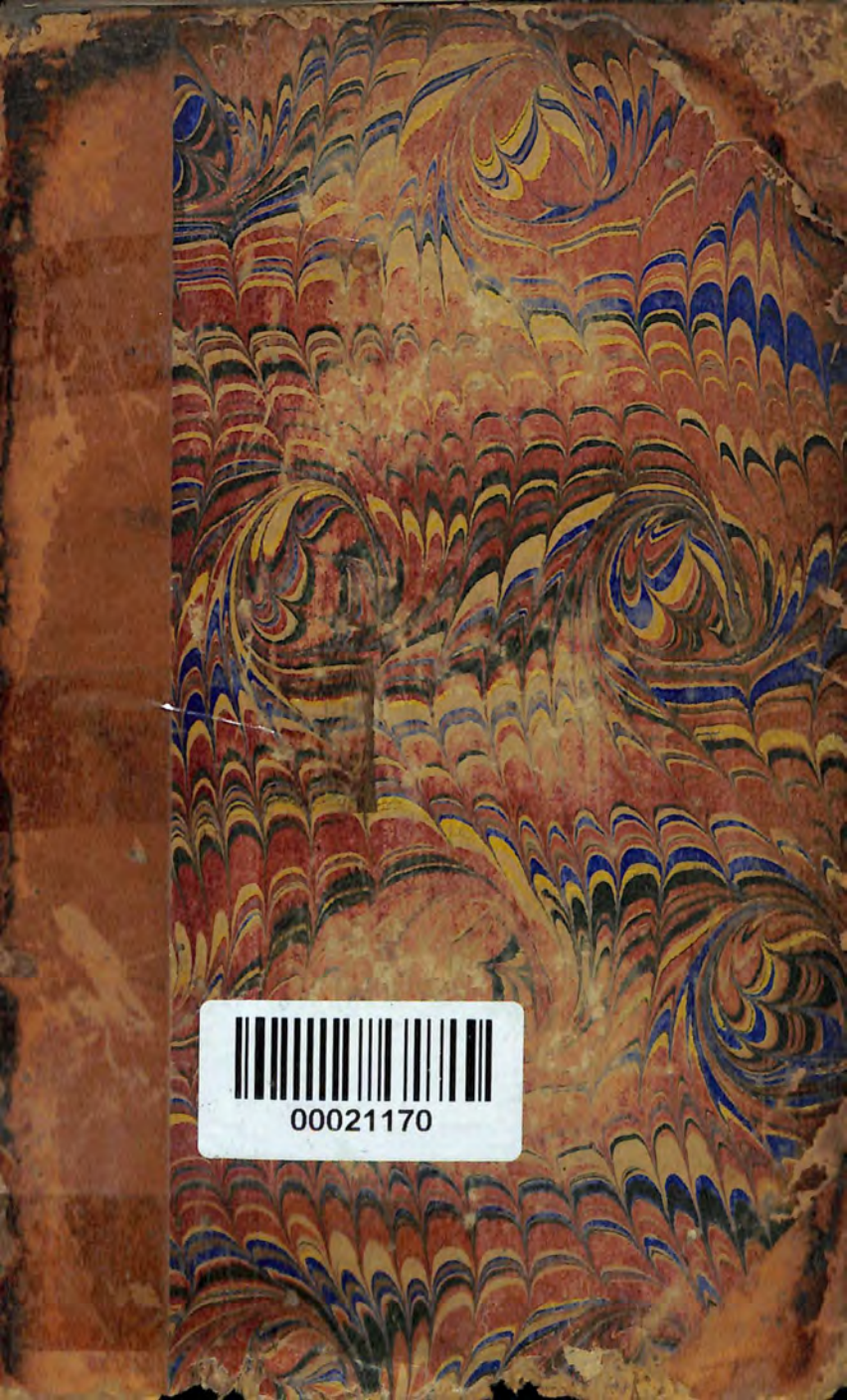
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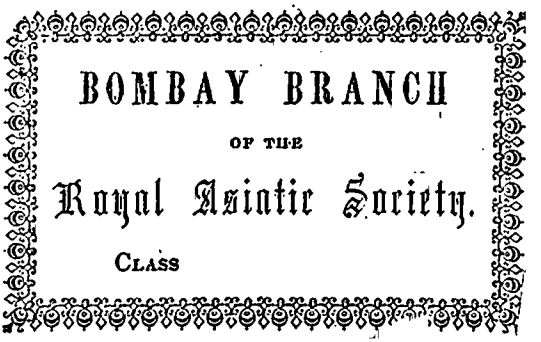

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ÆTAT: LXI.

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THE

LIFE

OF

WILLIAM ROSCOE,

BY HIS SON,

HENRY ROSCOE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE subject of a Reform in Parliament was one upon which Mr. Roscoe had early formed, and repeatedly expressed, a decided opinion. At the period of his election in 1806, he stated explicitly his sentiments on this question; and in his political correspondence he frequently refers to it as one of the most important considerations that could engage the attention of the legislature and of the public. In a letter to the Duke of Gloucester, written soon after the forming of Mr. Perceval's administration, after expressing his deep regret at that event, he thus proceeds:—

"When misfortunes occur, and I cannot but consider this as a very great one, we are frequently led to examine into the causes which have produced them; and if I were called upon to assign, to the best of my judgment, the true root and origin of all the evils which this country experiences, I should, after the fullest deliberation, attribute them to the corruption of the representation of the people, and the consequent subserviency of the House of Commons. For

this reason, I cannot express my astonishment and regret, that those great and distinguished characters to whom I have before alluded, and many others who, I truly believe, have the welfare, honour, and happiness of their country at heart, should, of late more particularly, have rebuked and discountenanced that strong and virtuous popular feeling which once looked up to them for its guidance and direction, and which, if it had been duly encouraged and segregated from its grosser particles (which would easily have been shaken off as soon as it was sanctioned by its proper patrons), would soon have given to worth and rank, to integrity and talents, that weight and direction in the country, which are now possessed by ministerial sycophants, professional statesmen, and time-serving intriguers. I will venture on your Royal Highness's indulgence still further, and will dare to say to a prince of the House of Brunswick, that if any thing can yet save us from destruction, and avert the fate that threatens us, it is the solemn and deliberate adoption by men of the highest character and connections in the country, of some plan, which shall relieve the House of Commons from its direct and immediate subserviency to the dictates of the Crown, and shall restore that tone and energy to the popular sentiment which it has now lost. If this could be effected, it would be an honour and a happiness

for a good man to be the chief minister of such a country,—of a country that could acknowledge his virtues, appreciate his talents, and confer on him that best reward, which the public voice alone can give; whilst, on the contrary, to hold even the highest station under the present system, which exhibits a subservient House of Commons, acting under a subservient minister, would, in the calm and deliberate judgment of truth, be a degradation and a disgrace. Your Royal Highness will not, I trust, think this language exaggerated, though strong; but, if any one could think so, let him look at the conduct of our ancestors through a long series of years; let him examine the records of the country, and let him then say, whether the independence of the House of Commons has not been the invariable object of their most anxious solicitude; the very talisman, upon the preservation of which the safety of the country, as a free country, entirely rested. That which they dreaded we have seen nearly, if not entirely, completed; yet, most unhappily, those who are most deeply interested in such an event have stood aloof till the very hope of any effectual remedy is relinquished, and a measure of the most vital importance to the country has taken place, without a single voice being raised against it;—for in what place is it now possible, that a voice could be raised that would produce the least effect?

"When I look back on what I have written, I cannot but feel that I may possibly have presumed too far on your Royal Highness's goodness, well knowing that, to many persons, the dissemination of sentiments like these might be considered as very dangerous to the peace of the country. One reflection, however, relieves the anxiety I should otherwise feel, and induces me not to withhold from your Royal Highness the warm dictates of my heart,—the hope, that your Royal Highness will still continue to attribute what I say to no improper motive, but will do me the justice to believe, that however erroneous my political opinions may be, I am at least sincere in my wishes for the prosperity of my country."

In the course of the present year, an opportunity offered itself to Mr. Roscoe, of bringing before the public the subject of Parliamentary Reform in a shape which he hoped might attract some attention. Mr. Brougham, who had lately taken his seat in the House of Commons, being anxious to obtain the opinions of some of his friends with regard to the most judicious method of introducing the subject of Parliamentary Reform, addressed to Mr. Roscoe (amongst others) a long and interesting letter, in which he both explained the view taken by himself, and requested the opinion of his correspondent. With this request it was impossible not to comply,

and Mr. Roscoe accordingly addressed to Mr. Brougham a letter, in which he stated, at considerable length, the reasons which induced him to differ from his correspondent with regard to the best means of effecting their common object. The answer was favourably received by Mr. Brougham, who communicated it to a few of his friends, and amongst others to Mr. Bentham, who, after expressing the satisfaction he had felt in the perusal of it, strongly recommended its publication. To a note from Mr. Brougham communicating this information, Mr. Roscoe replied in these terms: —

"I assure you that I feel I owe you much for your indulgence to my letter on Parliamentary Reform. Not that I am doubtful of the opinions there avowed, and which have long been the settled convictions of my mind, but because I have perhaps introduced topics which your letter did not call for. I should be much gratified to think that it had been favourably considered by one whom I so highly respect as Mr. Bentham. With regard to its publication, I feel no reluctance of a personal nature, and am only apprehensive that the manner of the argument is not equal, either to the goodness of the cause, or to the great importance of the subject. There are, also, several passages not strictly relating to the point, and which, though intrusted

to a friendly letter, I should certainly wish to omit in a publication."

He then urges his correspondent to make his own letter public, and suggests the propriety of printing both their letters in one pamphlet.

"This would at least have the effect of placing this great subject in its various points of view, and of inducing the public to take it into their deliberate consideration, without which nothing effectual will ever be done. But, besides this, it would, I hope, set an example not frequently seen, of two persons contending with each other, not for victory but for truth; not as in a battle, which shall defeat the other, but as in a race, which shall first arrive at the mark. If, however, you should feel the least reluctance either to the one or the other of these modes, I will, should you still think my sentiments can be of any use, endeavour to alter the form of my letter into a sort of dissertation, though I am aware that it must by this method lose much of any effect it might otherwise produce."

The resolution taken by Mr. Roscoe to publish his letter met with the full approbation of Mr. Brougham.

"I am truly delighted," he says, in answer to the foregoing letter, "to find you still so earnest in the great cause of Reform, and that you have listened to the anxious wish of some of its most respectable, though less clamorous supporters,

viz. to give your letter to the public. I have again perused it with much care and increased pleasure. There are certainly some points on which I continue to differ materially. But, it contains so powerful a defence of reform, in a narrow compass, and leads so directly to the grand point of extended discussion upon the whole subject; moreover, it rescues by so impressive and eloquent a statement the reformers from the vulgar charge of aiming at confusion, that I consider the publication as likely to prove essentially useful, even to the specific plans or detached measures which may be brought forward next session, and certainly as eminently subservient to the cause in general."

By the encouragement thus unreservedly extended to him, Mr. Roscoe was induced to give his letter to the public, which he did in the summer of the year 1811. Some few alterations were made in it, for the purpose of rendering it fit for the public eye, but in substance it remained the same as originally written.

Now that the great measure of Parliamentary Reform has received the sanction of the legislature, after an opposition unexampled in character and duration, it cannot be uninteresting to recal the plans, which at different periods its friends have proposed, for the purpose of effecting the object of their wishes. A considerable class of reformers, of whom, at this time, Mr.

Brougham may be regarded as the leader, were anxious to attempt some measure, however inconsiderable in itself, which might yet be regarded as the commencement of a better order of things. Though conscious that more important changes were called for, they thought that the impossibility of then effecting such changes, justified them in aiming at an inferior but more attainable object. They imagined that a measure so moderate, so just, and so rational, might be brought forwards, that the enemies of reform would be unable, or perhaps unwilling to oppose it; and they regarded the largeness of the demand, in former instances, as the cause of the want of success. The measures which at this period Mr. Brougham had in contemplation, are thus described in Mr. Roscoe's letter: —

"I shall now beg leave more particularly to notice the steps towards such a reform, which are pointed out in your letter, and which you inform me it is shortly your intention to take, by proposing such measures in parliament. The first of these is, *limiting the number of inferior placemen in the House of Commons, and the leaving there only the ministers and principal members of the boards.* The second is, *the correction of the corrupt or defective representation of the Scottish counties;* a subject which you have most clearly stated, and of the necessity of remedying the defects of which there cannot in any impar-

tial mind exist a doubt. In the third place, *you would give the elective franchise to the English copyholder.* You have also a fourth object in view, *the laying the foundation of a Scotch and English borough reform;* avoiding as much as possible the principle of disfranchisement, but obtaining the voluntary sale of some English boroughs, giving to other towns a right of representation, and adding in some instances to the county members. These measures you conceive to be 'sufficient to begin with,' and 'sufficient to satisfy the most sanguine reformer.'"

To this plan of proceeding Mr. Roscoe then states his objections; the first of which is its impracticability, from its failing to meet the wishes of any considerable class of reformers:—

"In one word, it appears to me, to go much too far to obtain the support of one party, and not far enough to command that of the other. The time for intermediate measures is past. Those who are in the possession of the emoluments of office, and rely upon borough influence, have taken their stand; they will either retain all or lose all; and would consider the smallest concession towards reform as a Hollander would the cutting through an embankment, which would soon let in the ocean that must sweep him away. There cannot, therefore, be in my apprehension, the slightest expectation entertained, that any one of these measures will be acceded

to by any of those who have hitherto objected to reform; and who, if the proposed alteration be small, will treat it as insidious, if extensive, will consider it as bold and ruinous; and, as in cases of difference of opinion, the precise degree of difference has little effect on the bitterness of opposition,—except that experience has shown, that such bitterness is generally greater where the points in difference are less,—so the same artillery would be brought to bear against your propositions, as would be brought against one for a more general reform in the mode of electing members to serve in parliament. On the other hand, the friends to such a reform, founding their ideas upon the principle, that every person under equal circumstances has an equal right to vote, would regard your propositions with coldness, as not answering the great object towards which they earnestly look, and with jealousy, as substituting an imperfect regulation in the place of the ultimate result of their efforts. Under these circumstances, I doubt, whether either of the great parties into which the nation is divided, would even wish to see your measures carried into effect."

He again adverts to the tenacity with which the enemies of reform cling to the abuses by which they profit, in the following passage:—

"He who attempts to restore a mouldering brick, or to replace a rotten timber, is as ob-

noxious to them as he who would pull down the building. It is in the holes, and chinks, and corners, which time and decay have produced, that they live, and feed, and fatten; and the first symptom of improvement is to them the signal of alarm."

The real sources from which reform was to be looked for are thus pointed out.

"To you, my dear Sir, the result of these observations will not be difficult to collect. Were it necessary for me to explain them further, I should say, that it is not by agitating any partial reforms, but by producing a serious conviction in the public mind, of the necessity of an incorrupt and independent House of Commons, that the friends of reform must eventually hope for success. This conviction the people are rapidly obtaining, in a manner which they cannot but feel and acknowledge.

"The friends of reform may, perhaps, by calm and temperate discussion contribute in some degree to promote it; but the most powerful advocates of reform are the adherents of the present corrupt system, and the most unanswerable arguments are the present state of the country, the increasing weight of taxation, the profuse waste of the blood and treasure of the nation, the enormous sinecures enjoyed by ministerial dependants, and the appointment of inefficient and inexperienced ministers to offices

of the highest trust. It is to such arguments, and to the prevailing opinion that such transactions have not met with due animadversion and restraint from the Commons' House of Parliament, that we are to attribute the deep impression which has been made on the public mind. As long as such practices continue, the public dissatisfaction must increase; and the time either now is, or will soon arrive, when every person must ask himself the important question, what opinions he means decisively to adopt, and what course of conduct to pursue."

The nature and extent of the change in the elective franchise advocated by Mr. Roscoe appear in the following passage: —

"In order to accomplish these objects in their full extent, it would be necessary that the right of voting should not depend on the various, and in some instances capricious qualifications, which at present exist, but should be extended to all; by which I mean, *to all who as householders are heads of families, and contribute to the exigencies of the state*, as well as to some other descriptions of the community; and that all persons holding places and pensions should be incapable of being elected, or if they afterwards accept of places, should absolutely be deprived of seats in the House. This I should consider as a full and substantial reform."

He afterwards adverts to the consequences of such a reform: —

"To whom would the granting of an equal right of suffrage be an offence, but to those who are interested in the corrupt system of trafficking in boroughs? In fact, such a reform would not only occasion no tumult, but would be the means of preventing it, and would put an end for ever to those disgraceful scenes of bribery and intoxication, which, on the occurrence of an election, disgust every thinking man in the kingdom. By a proper division of each county into districts, every member ought to be elected on the same day. No person would be under the necessity of going above a very few miles from his own house. All pretext for bribery under the idea of paying the travelling charges of electors, &c., would be done away, and the House of Commons would, in a great degree, if not entirely, be spared the laborious and irksome service of election committees, which occupy the chief part of the first session of every Parliament, and are beneficial only to the lawyers who attend them."

On the *danger of change*, an argument which may be urged against every improvement, Mr. Roscoe makes the following observations: —

"I have before hinted an opinion, that alterations or reforms in government are often more

to be dreaded from the opposition they meet with, than from the effects they would be likely to produce. Ever since the French Revolution an universal panic seems to have pervaded this country; and because the people there became frantic on rushing out from their prison, we cannot walk out of our houses to take the air, without fearing a similar result. This disposition is fostered and promoted, with the utmost diligence, by all those whose interest it is to keep us from looking into our own concerns. As soon any public abuse is pointed out, and a desire expressed to prevent it, we are told to look at the French Revolution, and observe the dreadful effects of attempting the work of reformation. The false and slavish maxim that it is

> —— 'better to bear the ills we have,
> Than fly to others that we know not of,'

is held to us *in terrorem*, as if it were better to bear *actual*, *certain*, and *present* evils, than to take *the chance* of incurring evils of which we confessedly know nothing, and which may therefore *have no existence* but in a distempered and timid imagination."

The letter, when printed, was again honoured with the full approbation of the distinguished statesman to whom it was addressed:—"I have just received your two covers, and greatly rejoice at your publishing the letter. I have read it again,

and (which does not always happen) like it even better in print than in MS. It must do good, and people will read it who wont look at a *book* on the subject."

At the close of his life Mr. Roscoe had the happiness of seeing a scheme of reform introduced, founded upon the principles which he had himself thus earnestly supported. He witnessed an attempt made to abolish "the various and capricious qualifications" of voters, and to subtitute, in place of them, a franchise at once just, simple, and rational, in those "who as householders are heads of families, and contribute to the exigencies of the state." He saw a system proposed which realised, in almost every particular, the plan recommended by himself. He did not, indeed, live to see the completion of this great measure, or to witness the confirmation which it afforded of the many important truths contained in his Letter to Mr. Brougham: to mark the accuracy of his assertion that "the feelings of the people, when once warmed and excited, will not stop short of an ultimate and substantial reform," and that "alterations or reforms in government are more to be dreaded from the opposition they meet with, than from the effects they are likely to produce." It was the happy fortune of his distinguished correspondent not only to see these important changes

effected, but also to be one of the principal instruments of their accomplishment.

Soon after the publication of the Letter to Mr. Brougham, an answer to it appeared from the pen of Mr. John Merritt, a gentleman of Liverpool. The object of this publication was to demonstrate, that the scheme of reform suggested by Mr. Roscoe was at once uncalled for and dangerous, and that the system of influence under which the country had for so long a course of years been governed was perfectly in accordance with the principles of the constitution. Referring to Burke's "seeming paradox," that though a theory may be beautiful and correct, yet it may be impossible or dangerous to reduce it to practice, Mr. Merritt contended that the notion of an independent House of Commons, though plausible in theory, was utterly impracticable.

For some time Mr. Roscoe was undecided whether he should extend the controversy by replying to this publication, which ultimately, however, he resolved to do; and in "An Answer to a Letter from Mr. John Merritt, on the Subject of Parliamentary Reform," * he discussed at considerable length the topics in dispute between them. He exposed the unphilosophical and absurd idea that what is theoretically true can be

* Liverpool; printed by M. Galway and Co. 1812.

practically false, though he admits, that in the application of the theory of politics there may be found much difficulty. With regard to the principal point of Mr. Merritt's argument, the constitutional propriety of the system of *influence*, or as it may be more truly termed, of *corruption*, Mr. Roscoe readily demonstrated its fallacy, and showed, even from the admissions of his opponent, how dangerous to the liberties of the people such a system must be.

"If this were the system of the government, it is of all engines of oppression undoubtedly the worst. The conflicts which arose between the contending powers of King, Lords, and Commons, in former times, are beyond all comparison preferable to the dead, spiritless, unelastic pressure of such a government. In comparison with this, a direct and open despotism is liberal and magnanimous. By whatever name the ruler may be distinguished, he there appears in his own character, and is himself responsible to public opinion for the manner in which he exercises his authority; but if such a ruler can by any contrivance establish an intermediate body between himself and the people, who shall be supposed to guard their rights and defend their interests, whilst, in fact, they are only the creatures of the crown, corrupted and paid to sanction every act, and interpose as a screen between the resentment of the people and the

misconduct of their rulers,—this, of all the situations in which a country can be placed, is the most fatal, the most humiliating, and the most hopeless. It is calculated not only to *oppress* but to *insult* a nation. It is to tyrannise over them by their own consent, and to close their lips against even complaint and remonstrance. It bears with it, in short, the worst features of the gloomy reign of Tiberius, and threatens this once favoured country with a long series of abject despondency, servility, and disgrace."*

On the imputation so frequently cast upon the friends of reform, that they attributed to the people at large much more virtue and public spirit than in fact they possessed; and that their schemes, though they might be well meant, were yet short sighted, Mr. Roscoe observes; —

"Amongst other means to which these practical men have resorted to injure the cause of reform, towards whatever object it may be directed, it is not unusual for them to represent the advocates for improvement as *men of warm hearts but weak understandings*, who are apt to attribute to mankind in general better qualities than they in reality possess, and who are therefore always mistaken in their reasonings respecting them.

* "Quinetiam speciem libertatis quandam induxit, conservatis senatui ac magistratibus, et majestate pristinâ et potestate. Neque tam parvum quidquam, neque tam magnum publici privatique negotii fuit, de quo non ad P. C. referretur." *Suet. in vit. Tiber.*

" Nor can it be denied, that if we are to judge from the result of their efforts, there often appears to be too much reason for the imputation. This, however, is not a *necessary*, much less an *inevitable* consequence; and he who forms his political creed on a presumption of the *general depravity of mankind*, is perhaps liable to fall into as great, and certainly a much more dangerous error, than he whose experience leads him to attribute to the rest of mankind *some portion* of those better principles, for which he expects that the rest of the world should give him credit. Dark as the political horizon may appear, yet, if we look into the circles of private life, we shall find, that integrity, truth, and justice are not yet exploded amongst mankind;—that magnanimity excites admiration, generosity gratitude, —and that all the best feelings and affections of the heart yet exist in their full force. Where, then, is the absurdity of presuming, that he who would not commit *a dishonest action* in private life, would not lend his aid to *an act of public injustice?* That he who would not be guilty of *a highway robbery*, would not willingly associate himself with *a band of pirates?* That he who would shudder at the thought of *murdering his neighbour*, would not, for the sake of his private emolument, instigate or encourage a war in which *thousands of his neighbours* must inevitably perish?

"It is only by extending his sphere of action, and supposing that an individual will most likely perform upon a large scale the same part that he does on a small one, and the absurdity vanishes. What would be the condition of private society, if envy, jealousy, fear, distrust, and hatred, were the only feelings by which mankind were actuated? but still more unfortunate is it, when these dreadful and unsocial passions are intermingled in the character of nations, and influence the conduct of states towards each other.

"The former is only an *accidental and local disease*, the latter is *a sweeping pestilence*, by which whole nations are destroyed. These, I may be told, are *truisms;* but when truisms are forgotten or disregarded, their truth is surely no objection against their being revived and enforced. What, then, has the politician to do, but to apply to the affairs of nations and the intercourse of states those principles of morality which he finds in the relations of private life? to banish the absurd and dangerous maxim, that 'there is one line of moral conduct for nations, and another for individuals;' to exemplify in public those maxims of justice, sincerity, moderation, and good-will, towards which every government pays a *nominal homage*, and which are the very cement of private society; and to render a government *the example and pattern*, and not the corruption and opprobrium of a people."

While the reflections of Mr. Roscoe had led him to the conviction, that it was only from the introduction of a large and substantial measure of reform that success could be expected, he was fully aware that the combination of persons of rank, property, and influence with the mass of the people, would be necessary to give this great object any chance of accomplishment. He, therefore, anxiously exerted himself in every quarter to impress this fact upon the minds of his political friends, and to induce them to wave all minor differences of opinion in favour of some plan which should unite the great body of reformers. He earnestly desired to see those whom he considered as the natural leaders of the people step forwards to direct popular opinion on this subject, and by the weight of their influence to give at once power and steadiness to the efforts of the reformers. In a letter to one of the most illustrious of his correspondents, written in September, 1812, he says, "Mr. Brougham has just left Allerton, where he passed a few days with me, and told me, in private conversation, of the efforts made by you to induce the great leaders of (what I am sorry we must still call) opposition to unite in some general expression, before the rising of parliament, of the necessity of measures of reform. Such a step, if it could have been accomplished, would have had the happiest effect, in uniting the great body of the people with

their natural leaders, the nobility and proprietors of the land; the union of whom is indispensably necessary to resist the influence of the Crown on the one hand, and to correct and regulate the popular sentiment, so as to keep it within its strict constitutional limits, on the other. You must have perceived, that if the people have looked out for other organs to express their sentiments, it is, because they were compelled to it. In the present feeling of the nation, to advocate the indefinite continuance of the war, and to assert the inexpediency of all reform whatever, is to destroy all sympathy with the people, and to drive them on to lengths which would otherwise never have been thought of. The people cannot and will not submit to perish in silence; and if goaded beyond a certain point, become as frantic as an individual."

Amongst the various political questions in which Mr. Roscoe had interested himself, the opening of the trade with India was one which had engaged a large share of his attention. In the year 1792 he had, in conjunction with Dr. Currie, exerted himself to bring this subject before the public. On his election for Liverpool, it formed a prominent topic in his addresses to his constituents, and in his speech on the abolition of the slave trade, he pointed out the compensation to be derived by the African merchants from this branch of commerce. An

opportunity, which he enjoyed in the spring of the present year, of conversing fully on the subject with Mr. Creevey, who had visited Liverpool during the Easter recess, again drew his attention to the subject:—"It was my intention," he says, in a letter to Mr. Whitbread, dated the 9th January, 1809, "before my last letter, to have addressed you on a subject of great importance, which must ere long be brought before the public, and in which you can scarcely avoid taking a leading part,—I mean that of the East Indies; but I was desirous of maturing my ideas on the subject so as to perceive, as clearly as I could, the object that ought to be aimed at, and to discover the best mode of accomplishing it. I know that to many persons the very mention of this subject is a cause of alarm, but where the interests of so many millions are concerned, you will, I am sure, feel no such sentiment. On the contrary, the magnitude of the effort will be an additional motive with you to engage in it, and your exertions will be in proportion to the quantity of good likely to be produced. As what I have to say is, however, too voluminous for a letter, I shall probably take the liberty of submitting it to you, ere long, in another form."

The views which he entertained on the Indian question were soon afterwards communicated by him in a long letter to Mr. Creevey, in which

he enters at considerable length into the state of our Indian possessions.

In the year 1807 he had taken a part at a public meeting held in Liverpool, on the subject of the opening of the trade; and again, in the course of the present year (1812), he came forwards on a similar occasion. The charter of the Company being about to expire, meetings were held in different parts of the country, for the purpose of petitioning parliament for a free trade, and the inhabitants of Liverpool, amongst other places, met together to oppose a renewal of the monopoly. The resolutions proposed and carried on this occasion were prepared by Mr. Roscoe, who supported them in an address of considerable length.* He treated the subject entirely as a commercial question, and rested the claims of the petitioners upon the principles of free trade. The following are the resolutions directed to this part of the question:—

"That we, in common with the rest of our fellow-subjects, have a right to a free trade with all parts of the British empire, and other countries in amity with these united kingdoms, subject only to such general regulations of trade as the policy of this country may require, or as may be necessary for maintaining the relations of these realms with foreign states, and

* Printed in the Liverpool Mercury of 20th March, 1812.

securing to government those revenues which may be necessary for its support.

"That we humbly conceive the great object of all legislative regulation, in the commercial concerns of the country, is the protection of this equal right in the subject, and the further extension of an honourable, just, and legitimate commerce; and that therefore all monopolies which exclude the general body of the people from trading with other countries, are in derogation of the birth-right of the subject, and counteract the chief purpose which they ought to have in view.

"That the monopoly of the East India Company is an additional instance, with others which might be adduced, of the injurious consequences that must always attend such attempts at an exclusive traffic; and that we conceive it to have been fully demonstrated, not only by the most conclusive reasoning, but by incontrovertible facts, that such monopoly is prejudicial to the general interests of the country at large, and discourages that commercial spirit which, from the nature and local situation of these islands, is indispensable to their prosperity, and upon which their security, at this moment, essentially depends."

On the subject of this meeting Mr. Roscoe thus addressed the Duke of Gloucester, in a letter, dated the 21st March:—

"I have desired the printer of the 'Liverpool Mercury' to forward you a copy of that paper, in which you will see the result of a public meeting for petitioning parliament for an open trade to the East Indies, and will, I hope, think that the resolutions there adopted have placed the subject on its proper ground, that of a claim of *right*. I also venture to flatter myself that your Royal Highness will think that in what I have said I have acted the part of a friend to my country, in endeavouring, as far as in my power, to prevent the people being deluded to their destruction, by the prospect of advantages which it is impossible should be realised in time to provide for present emergencies.

"That the East India trade will, when opened, be highly beneficial to this country I have no doubt; but if the expectation of it should call off our attention from the real causes of our distress, and induce us to suppose that we can dispense with the advantages we derive from the preservation of an intercourse with America, it may lead us into a most serious error."

The occurrence of a general election in the autumn of 1812 again drew Mr. Roscoe into the toils and anxieties of public life. With regard to himself, his increasing age and his engagements in business precluded him from entertaining the idea of resuming his seat in parliament, though, had his inclinations been so directed,

opportunities were not wanting of indulging them. In the month of September, he received a confidential communication from one of his friends in London (Mr. John M'Creery), stating, that a meeting having been held of certain electors of Westminster, preparatory to a larger assembly, he had been requested on behalf of the gentlemen who composed that meeting to inquire from Mr. Roscoe whether, if elected free of expense on the pure principles of the last election, he would be willing to perform the duties of their representative. "I need not tell you," says his correspondent, "what answer I should wish you to enable me to give. Your love of liberty, your love of *the principle*, will, I am persuaded, dictate the answer, and overrule all considerations arising from personal inconvenience." The answer of Mr. Roscoe to this flattering communication was conveyed in the following letter: —

"Your letter of the 24th, desiring to be informed, whether, if I were chosen for Westminster, upon the pure principles of the last election, I would undertake the duties of the office, has greatly surprised me.

"That my name should be in any manner suggested as connected with the representation of the first city in the empire, is in itself an honour of which I cannot but be most deeply sensible. At the same time, I am compelled to

say, that if the result were as certain as the object is elevated, I must most seriously decline it, and to your question so distinctly put must answer, No. The truth is, that if a Parliamentary life were in my view, I should think myself bound, in the first instance, to renew the offer of my services to my native place, where, if I have not the certainty, I might now have the fairest prospect of success. The same reasons that have induced me to decline the solicitations of my friends here, must operate equally at least as to any other place, however more distinguished, with the additional consideration, that after the decided step I have already taken here, I could not accede to any other prospect without subjecting myself to a charge of inconsistency, which it has ever been my endeavour to avoid.

"This inquiry, however it may have originated, or to whatever number of electors it may be confined, will always be recollected by me with the highest gratification. Not, I trust, from any weak motives of personal vanity, but because it affords me the happiness of thinking that the principles I have avowed in favour of liberty, peace, and reform, are in strict unison with those of the enlightened electors of Westminster. Nor can I entertain a doubt that they will persevere in the cause they have already so nobly begun, and by maintaining the independence and purity of election, become the saviours of their country.

"I have now only to thank you, my dear friend, for the solicitude you so kindly express as to my decision, and to assure you of my invariable attachment."

When the elections came on, Mr. Roscoe learned with much surprise that he had been proposed as one of the candidates for the representation of the borough of Leicester. No previous intimation had been conveyed to him of the intention of the electors to make use of his name, and he had not therefore the opportunity of expressing his dissent to the measure. His name had, in fact, been selected as that of a person whose character was generally known and regarded, for the purpose of affording some strength to an opposition, which, at that time, was little more than hopeless. At the conclusion of the election, it appeared that while the successful candidates numbered 1116 and 967 voters, those who had supported Mr. Roscoe amounted to 412. It was only through the public papers that Mr. Roscoe obtained a knowledge of this transaction, and immediately on the conclusion of the election he transmitted to Leicester the following address: —

"*To the Independent Electors of the Borough of Leicester.*

"Gentlemen,

"Although I have received no information, except from the public papers, of the circum-

stances which have taken place in your very populous and respectable town, during the late election for its representatives in parliament; yet, I cannot affect to be ignorant that I had, on that occasion, the honour of being proposed as one of your candidates; an honour conferred upon me, not only without my solicitation, but without my knowledge; and which can admit of no other construction than that of being an explicit approbation of those public principles which I have had occasion so repeatedly to avow.

"That under such circumstances I should have had the support of no less than *four hundred and twelve independent voters*, whilst one of the successful candidates numbered only 967, and the other only 1116 votes, is to me a subject of gratification. Nor is this diminished, when I reflect that it is highly probable, from the union of interests that appears to have subsisted between those candidates, that a great part of the votes so given were *divided votes*. Even this majority has not, as it appears, been obtained without a powerful struggle; nor, as we are expressly informed by those gentlemen in their printed letter of thanks, '*without calling forth great and burdensome exertions from a numerous body of their friends.*'

"In such a situation, for me to remain silent would evince a want of feeling, of which I hope I am utterly incapable. No, Gentlemen, although

I am personally an entire stranger to you, yet be assured, that in spirit and in principle I am with you; and that you have not formed a wrong estimate of me, when you consider me as 'The friend of *peace*, of *reform*, and of *religious liberty*.' Nor am I less gratified by the independent and truly constitutional manner in which you have endeavoured to obtain your object, divested of '*the influence of party, and without any personal feelings of opposition*.' These are the sentiments that ought to animate the breast of every elector; but with you they are not vain and empty professions. Even your opponents have publicly acknowledged in their final address, that '*you were entitled to their thanks*,' and '*that you have manifested your wish to promote the peace of Leicester, and the personal safety of those engaged in the election*.'

"I hope that the pleasure I feel upon this occasion, and which I am now endeavouring to express, will be attributed to its proper motives. That I am insensible to the honourable esteem of good men, will not, I trust, be supposed; but a still more legitimate cause of my satisfaction is in the decided proof that has been given, as well in your distinguished town as in other parts of the kingdom, of the more general diffusion of principles favourable to *freedom*, to *peace*, to well *regulated government*, and to *high and enlightened morality*; in the conviction that

the great work, which must eventually produce the reformation and happiness of the people, is already begun; and in the ardent hope, that as we have lived to see this country perform *one great act of disinterested justice*, so we may yet expect to see the defects and abuses of our political system corrected and improved, by wise, temperate, peaceable, and effective measures, and this country raised to that eminence, to which, from the good sense, the courage, the industry, and the talents of its inhabitants, it is so justly entitled to aspire,

"I have the honour to be,
"With sentiments of the highest respect,
"Gentlemen,
"Your most faithful servant,
"WILLIAM ROSCOE.

"Allerton Hall, Oct. 12, 1812."

With regard to the representation of Liverpool, Mr. Roscoe was pressed, individually, by many of his friends, to present himself again as a candidate; and the strong assurances of support which he received might have justified him in looking for success. With these solicitations, however, influenced by those sufficient reasons which have already been mentioned, he uniformly declined to comply. Though himself debarred from becoming the representative of his

townsmen, he felt no little share of anxiety with regard to the choice which they might make. He thought that, if at this juncture, a triumph could be obtained for liberal principles in Liverpool, an impression would be made upon the country at large, which might be essentially serviceable to the two great objects of his political life,—peace and reform. To make this triumph complete, it was necessary that two members attached to these principles should be returned; —a step which the state of parties in Liverpool seemed to render feasible. The next consideration was the selection of two persons, who, from character, talents, and public services, might be supposed to have a claim upon the suffrages of the electors. That Mr. Roscoe, in common with all the other friends of freedom in Liverpool, should in the first instance look to Mr. Brougham, as the fittest person to forward these great objects, was not surprising. His exertions in the case of the Orders in Council; his declared attachment to reform; his brilliant though brief career in the House of Commons; and his reputation for extraordinary talent, then rising rapidly towards that height which it has since attained, all pointed him out as the individual best qualified to give splendour, dignity, and success, to a popular contest. A long and confidential correspondence on political subjects between Mr. Brougham and Mr. Roscoe, had confirmed, in the mind of the

latter, the high opinion which Mr. Brougham's public conduct had created, and had added feelings of personal attachment to those of admiration and respect for his political character.

A number of the merchants of Liverpool, desirous of testifying their sense of the public services of Mr. Brougham, especially in the matter of the Orders in Council, resolved to give a public dinner in honour of him, and to solicit his attendance on the occasion. This circumstance afforded Mr. Roscoe the opportunity of enjoying the society of his distinguished correspondent for a few days at Allerton,—a pleasure of which he had been long desirous. The enthusiasm which, at the public dinner, attended the coupling the name of Mr. Brougham with the representation of Liverpool, left no doubt with regard to the strong and general feeling existing in his favour.

The other individual selected to stand by the side of Mr. Brougham in this great contest, was Mr. Creevey, himself a native of Liverpool, and well known to its chief inhabitants. Consistency of political conduct, and an intimate acquaintance with the commercial and financial interests of the country, frequently displayed in the debates of the House of Commons, seemed to render this gentleman a fit coadjutor to Mr. Brougham, while the exertions he had lately made to give to the country at large the benefit

of a free commerce with the East Indies, might well be supposed to have rendered him popular in the great mercantile community of Liverpool.

The attempt to return two members of liberal principles excited, as it was expected it would do, a spirit of strong opposition. The friends of the late members, General Gascoyne and General Tarleton, clearly foresaw, that unless some new and extraordinary effort was made, their adversaries would have every chance of success. From the ranks of both of them, therefore, a number of the most wealthy and powerful of their supporters stepped forwards, and in order to secure a candidate equal to the task of contending with Mr. Brougham, invited Mr. Canning to Liverpool. The consequence of this step was, that the party of General Tarleton, whose influence had been gradually diminishing, became almost extinct; and a junction was formed between the supporters of General Gascoyne and of Mr. Canning. With this combination of forces, to which the corporation influence added great strength, the friends of the liberal candidates were unable to contend; and after an arduous and well maintained struggle of several days, the election terminated in favour of Mr. Canning and General Gascoyne.

Having refused to come forward in his own person, Mr. Roscoe did not think it proper to take an active and conspicuous part in the con-

test, though the friends of Mr. Brougham and Mr. Creevey were, as it may be supposed, very principally guided by his advice. In the course of the election, and while the event of it was yet uncertain, it was supposed that a compromise might be effected with the opposite party, and the return of Mr. Brougham secured. To this course of proceeding Mr. Roscoe was strenuously opposed; and his conduct on this occasion incurred the censure of some of his friends. To these censures it may be a sufficient answer to state, that the person whose interests were most nearly affected expressed his full approbation of the course recommended by Mr. Roscoe.—"I only wish to say," he observes, in a letter, written immediately after the election, "that wherever I go, I find the most respectful ideas of our strength in the late contest; and that my constant theme is the propriety of having tried two, and refused all idea of compromise. I found it the more necessary to speak this language, because notions seemed to have got abroad, as if it was not consonant to my own views. You know the contrary, and I flatter myself the idea is at an end." The motives which influenced Mr. Roscoe on this occasion were worthy of his character. At the time when an accommodation was possible, the event of the election was of course in doubt; and Mr. Roscoe could not reconcile himself to the idea that he

might be made instrumental in the return of a person to whose principles he was so decidedly opposed. Nor did he esteem it honourable, for any object of public convenience, to desert that friend, who had been induced, principally at his solicitation, to engage in the contest, and who might thus be deprived of an opportunity of obtaining a seat in parliament.

Under the disappointment which Mr. Roscoe naturally felt at the failure of the efforts made by the friends of freedom in Liverpool to return representatives enjoying their confidence and respect, he found a satisfaction in reflecting, that the contest had been the means of calling forth the eloquence, and exhibiting the high genius of one who has since acted so distinguished a part in the political history of his age.

The speeches delivered by Mr. Canning in the course of the election (which were collected and published soon after its termination) contain an elaborate defence of the war, and unsparing attacks upon the friends of parliamentary reform. Unwilling to suffer a publication like this to pass without notice, Mr. Roscoe, a few weeks subsequent to its appearance, felt it incumbent on him to examine the arguments it contained, which he did in a short pamphlet, entitled, "A Review of the Speeches of the Right Honourable George Canning on the late Election for Liverpool, so far as they relate to the Questions of

Peace and Reform."* "The frequency and earnestness," he says, "with which these questions were discussed by Mr. Canning, could not fail of engaging my attention. I found those principles and opinions which I was well known to entertain, in common with a very great proportion of the community, not only controverted as ignorant theories, the result of an enthusiastic and presumptuous philosophy, but represented as criminal and dangerous—as directly hostile to the honour and interests of the country—as leading to mad and desperate attempts to involve the nation at large in the most deplorable calamities."

Mr. Roscoe then proceeds to comment upon the arguments made use of by Mr. Canning in defence of the war, and especially that most extraordinary and delusive position, that the warfare in which we were engaged was a visitation from heaven, and that it was in vain to struggle against the divine wrath:—"What, gentlemen," he observes, "should you think of the sense or the fairness of men, who, in the midst of the distress and desolation occasioned in one of your West India Islands by a hurricane or tornado, while the air was involved in a pitchy darkness and the city rocking with volcanic explosions, were to run about the streets, proclaiming them-

* Liverpool, Dec. 1812.

selves the friends of peace and of perpendicular position." And again, in speaking of the sufferings occasioned by the war, he says, "but that these sufferings are inflicted by any other hand than that which bringeth down punishment upon nations, I must utterly deny."—"It is not easy," observes Mr. Roscoe, "to conceive how Mr. Canning could venture to advance, and repeatedly to insist upon, this very singular sentiment. Could he for a moment conceive that it was in his power to induce his hearers to relinquish their understandings, to extinguish their feelings, to abandon every effort for their own security and their own happiness, and to resign themselves in despair to whatever fate might be impending over them? Is it not an insult upon common sense to tell us that we can no more prevent the continuance of war, than we can prevent the effects of an earthquake or a tornado? Has not Mr. Canning himself entered into discussions on the question of peace? and did he ever hear of persons seriously deliberating on the best mode of preventing a hurricane or an earthquake, or of altering the course of nature in the system of the physical world?"

It is a matter of some curiosity at the present time to observe the manner in which the great question of parliamentary reform was treated, twenty years since, by the most brilliant politician of the day.

The tone of triumph assumed by Mr. Canning, in referring to the subject of reform, and the derision and contempt with which its advocates were uniformly treated by him, show how imperfectly he understood the progress of public opinion on this subject; but it is not improbable, that had the days of this celebrated statesman been prolonged, he might, upon this question, as he did upon others, have recurred to the principles of his early life. The fact that he had supported Mr. Pitt in his projects of reform, is very justly brought forward by Mr. Roscoe in answer to the imputations so freely cast by Mr. Canning on the motives of the reformers:—"Mr. Canning has been in the ranks of the reformers, and cannot but know that the grounds and reasons upon which they claim their constitutional rights, have too broad a foundation in the history and laws of the country and the practice of their ancestors, to be overthrown or invalidated by the mere assertion of any man; and ought to be aware that, as a person who has derived, or is likely to derive, peculiar advantages from the change of his political opinions, he should be particularly cautious in imputing to those who have adhered to their principles, those base and unworthy motives, which might with so much propriety be retorted on himself."

It is seldom that, in the political writings of Mr. Roscoe, any attempt at pleasantry is to be

found: almost the only instance of it occurs at the conclusion of the present pamphlet, where he ridicules the consolations administered by Mr. Canning for the sufferings of the war, and the admiration expressed by his audience at these portions of his speeches.

"Now, it is not easy to determine whether we ought most to admire the kind and consolatory language in which the orator thus consigns his hearers to irremediable distress, or the readiness and pleasure with which they surrender themselves to their fate. It is as novel as it is delightful to see with what ardour and cordiality they congratulate each other that no changes, either in the internal or external policy of the country, can remedy their sufferings, and how truly they participate in the cheering sentiment of the excellent old song—

'Let us all be unhappy together!'

"In this prosperous state of affairs, with which they are so highly gratified, it would be quite impertinent to interfere. About tastes it is in vain to dispute; and they who meddle on such occasions undertake a thankless and often a dangerous office. It is only a few weeks since, as my readers must all remember, that a circumstance occurred in the metropolis which strongly exemplifies this remark. An honest John Bull had been unluckily tempted to engage in a game of chance, as

improvidently as nations sometimes engage in a war. Having lost all his money, he wagered his clothes, and lost them also. Having then nothing left but his life, he placed that, too, on the chance of the die. Being still unfortunate, he fairly resigned himself up to his antagonist, who, with as little ceremony as Mr. Canning displays in pronouncing the decrees of heaven, hung him up on a lamp-post. A police officer passing by, and seeing so unusual a spectacle, hastened and cut him down. On such an occasion, it might be supposed, that the gratitude of the man to his benefactor would be unbounded; but what was the surprise of the interloper on finding, that the first use which the other made of his returning strength was to commence a violent attack upon him, from which he with difficulty extricated himself, and was obliged to resort for redress to a court of law. *Ex uno disce omnes.* This is a true prototype of the supporters of the war, and ought to be a caution to those officious persons who are so ready to assist their neighbours. People have, it is true, in general, no relish for hunger and thirst, poverty and nakedness, any more than for being hung up at a lamp post; but it must not be presumed from this that every one is of the same opinion. It is said there is a pleasure in madness which none but madmen know; and as Mr. Canning has told us that *war has its consolations, arising from the com-*

parison of our own sufferings with those of our enemies, so it is possible that the pleasure of knowing that others are miserable, may, in some persons, exceed the pain occasioned by the distress of them and their families; but this is a matter of feeling, not of reasoning, resulting from the organisation of the heart, not of the head. In this state of affairs, all that can be done is, to leave them to their own enjoyments, the circle of which has, in the course of the present year, been so considerably enlarged. Unfortunately, however, these Epicureans in misery cannot think their gratification complete unless the rest of their countrymen partake of the treat. Nor is this sufficient. They must not only be compelled to take their share, but they must take it with every demonstration of satisfaction and of gratitude to those who have so liberally provided it for them: otherwise the branding iron is in the fire; and Mr. Canning, the crier of the court, is ready to affix the indelible mark which is to render them the objects of aversion or of distrust to their countrymen for the remainder of their days.

"But I should do great injustice to the important towns before mentioned, and to that of Liverpool in particular, were I to allow it for one moment to be understood that the persons who could thus hear with patience and mark with their approbation the sentiments of Mr.

Canning, are to be considered as expressing the sense of the inhabitants, or even of a majority of the inhabitants of those places. It is not, indeed, easy to conceive how statements so fallacious, assertions so unfounded, accusations so injurious, and views of national policy so disheartening and unjust, could have met with the applause with which they were received. But that Mr. Canning's speeches have contributed to add to his popularity, or to attract a single individual to his cause, will not readily be believed. On the contrary, it must appear to every intelligent and impartial reader that these harangues exhibit nothing of those strong feelings for the happiness of the people, those comprehensive views of the public interest, or that deliberative wisdom which ought to characterise even the extemporaneous effusions of a truly enlightened statesman; but that they are the common and vulgar topics of those political partisans, who, however they may disagree amongst themselves, always make common cause against the people, and would gladly induce them to believe, that all opposition to their measures is not only useless, but criminal; not only irrational, but insane; not only imprudent, but contradictory to the immutable decrees of Providence."

Adverting to a passage in one of Mr. Canning's speeches, in which he alludes to the dis-

appointment of the rival candidate, Mr. Roscoe gives the following brief but eloquent character of that celebrated person: —

"And who was he that was thus marked out as retiring, disappointed in his expectations? A man of whom it is difficult to say, whether the courageous energy with which he has uniformly pursued every great and noble object, or the splendour of his talents and extent of his acquirements are the most conspicuous, — who would have reflected back, with additional lustre, the honour conferred on him by his constituents, — who has compressed within a small portion of his life, and a short parliamentary career, the most important services to his country; and who, in the midst of venality and corruption, the defalcation of the young and the prejudices of the old, has always stood up, the fearless and successful advocate of justice, of humanity, of freedom, and of peace. If such a man is not entitled to the affection and gratitude of his countrymen, and may not hope for the favour of Heaven upon his exertions, — then, indeed, a revolution has taken place in the moral constitution of the world, such as it has not before experienced.

'But evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness.'
'—— if this fail,
The pillar'd firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble.'

In a letter, conveying to one of his principal political friends an account of the Liverpool election, Mr. Roscoe states his sentiments with regard to the prospects of Reform.

"What has happened here has happened also at other places, and I cannot but particularly regret that Sir Samuel Romilly was not returned for Bristol. But, although I admit that the present opposition are not likely to be any gainers by the dissolution of parliament, yet I cannot but think that a more correct and enlightened spirit of improvement is gradually diffusing itself amongst the people at large.

"The efforts that have been made have all been respectable, founded on principle, and free from all just charge of outrage or violence; nor is it an unfavourable symptom that all attempts to carry the people to extremes have been put down and repressed, and a more distinct barrier drawn between the real and steadfast friends of the country, and those who would infuse their own intemperate and dangerous spirit into the community. What you have stated, respecting your own efforts to produce a declaration of sentiment favourable to reform, has given me the greatest pleasure. I hope and trust such a measure may yet be possible; and that the friends of real and practicable improvement may begin to understand each other. Certainly there has been, hitherto, some fatal mistake on

this subject; and the great mass of the people who wish to see a change of political measures, upon principles within the strict limits of the constitution, have been confounded with men who have taken upon themselves to be the organ of the people; but who, it now sufficiently appears, speak only their own violent, and often discordant, opinions.

"That this mistake has weakened the efforts of Opposition, even in Parliament itself, I am well convinced, and still more in the country at large; nor can it be remedied till our great statesmen will perceive the distinction that really subsists between the great body of the people who are favourable to reform, and those who undertake, without their consent, to express their sentiments, in a tone and manner which no liberal nor candid mind can approve."

CHAPTER XIII.

1812—1815.

Alterations at Allerton Hall. — Mr. Roscoe's illness — his study of bibliography — letter to Dr. Dibdin respecting a Life of Erasmus — projected account of his library and other collections — letter to Dr. Smith — verses on the Liverpool Election of 1812 *— his intention of writing the Life of Dr. Currie — letter to Dr. Wright — projects a translation of Lanzi — papers in the Transactions of the Linnæan Society — is elected an honorary member of the New York Historical Society — acquaintance with Mr. Owen of Lanark — letter to him. — Prince Sandars. Visit of Miss Aikin to Allerton. — Mr. Roscoe's taste for agricultural pursuits — communication to the Agricultural Society of West Derby — cultivation of Chat Moss — communication to the Board of Agriculture — letter to Sir John Sinclair — thanks of the Board. — Letter from General Dirom — allusion to his cultivation of Chat Moss in Mrs. Barbauld's "Eighteen Hundred and Eleven" — letter to her — acquaintance with Mr. Tollet and Mr. Wilbraham — letter from the latter. — Invitations to Holkham. — Letters from Dr. Smith. — Visit to Holkham. — The collection of MSS. there — undertakes the arrangement of them — bound by Mr. Jones of Liverpool. — Letters from Mr. Wilbraham and Mr. Coke. — Poem of "Holkham." — Letter from Mr. Coke to Sir J. Smith. — Presentation of the "Life of Leo" to Mr. Coke, and sonnet. — Letter from the Bishop of Norwich to Sir J. Smith. — "The Return." — Visit of Mr. Coke and Dr. Parr to Allerton.*

CHAPTER XIII.

For a considerable period previous to this time, much of Mr. Roscoe's attention had been devoted to the improvement of his mansion at Allerton. The older portion of the house having become dangerous from the decay of the timbers, he determined to pull it down, and to rebuild it on an uniform plan, so as to correspond with the centre and wing, which had been erected about sixty years previously. This alteration was necessarily attended by a change in the disposition of the grounds round the house; the gardens, which had been well laid out in the old style, being converted into pleasure grounds, ornamented with shrubberies and plantations. Until this time Mr. Roscoe had possessed very inadequate accommodation for his library, and for his collection of pictures, prints, and drawings, which year after year continued to accumulate upon his hands; but, in the construction of the new building, he secured for himself a handsome and capacious library, while the walls of the other new apartments were ornamented by his collection of paintings. The alterations being finished in the autumn of

the year 1812, he took possession of his new library, and to the too early occupation of this room he attributed a violent attack of sciatica, under the painful influence of which he continued for several months confined to the house. The arrangement and cataloguing of his books, to which at this time he made some considerable additions, afforded him the greatest pleasure, and induced him to resume the study of bibliography, a pursuit which during the composition of the "Life of Leo," had necessarily occupied some share of his attention. He entered with no little ardour into this renewed pursuit, and formed the design of illustrating the origin and progress of the art of printing, by a continued series of early printed books. The sale of some valuable collections in London favoured this design; and he became the purchaser of many rare and curious specimens of early typography. At the same time he diligently studied the various writers, both foreign and English, who have illustrated the science of bibliography by their industry and their learning, and particularly the "Annals" of Panzer, which he was accustomed to characterise as a most invaluable publication. Had he been enabled to complete his collection of early printed books upon the plan he meditated, it would have formed a highly interesting illustration of the progress of the art. The more active and

useful labours in which he had been engaged, rendered this pursuit of trifling value in his eyes; and he represents himself, in a letter to Dr. Aikin, as "a perfect idler, labouring under the idlest of all complaints, a bibliomaniacal affection."

His taste for the study of bibliography led him at this time into a correspondence with Dr. Dibdin, whose magnificent volumes were frequently the subject of his admiration. In one of his letters he notices the suggestion of Dr. Dibdin as to his writing a Life of Erasmus: —"I am too well acquainted with your entertaining volume of the *Bibliomania* to be ignorant of your recommendation to me to undertake a Life of Erasmus. That such a work is much wanting I admit, and I think it one of the finest subjects that could be undertaken; but you do me too much honour in thinking that I am competent to it. To execute it properly, a knowledge of the German language and literature would be indispensable. Much, I believe, has been done in Germany towards elucidating this important period of their literary history, and I trust it will not be long before some of our countrymen, fully qualified, will repair the defects of Knight and Jortin, and give us such a view of the subject as may gratify reasonable expectation."

The task of forming a catalogue of his library suggested to Mr. Roscoe the idea of a publi-

cation, which subsequent events prevented him from carrying into effect. His collection of books, of pictures, and of other works of art, having been formed with the view of illustrating the period of the revival of learning, it occurred to him that some account of it would not only be interesting in itself, but might prove useful to those whose studies were directed to the literary history of that period. The title-page of this work will give an idea of its proposed contents:—"Catalogue of a Private Collection of Books, Pictures, Drawings, Medals, and Prints, illustrating the Rise, Vicissitudes, and Establishment of Literature and Art in Europe; to which are added, *Collectiones Medicianæ*, or Pieces chiefly relating to the Family of the Medici, from MSS. and rare Books in this Collection, with numerous Portraits, Fac Similes, Engravings, and Vignettes, and occasional Remarks, biographical, historical, and critical."* Within two

* The following inscription was intended to be prefixed to the volume:—

HÆC MONUMENTA
ARTIUM LITERARUMQUE RENASCENTIUM
PRÆCIPUE SUB AUSPICIIS
COSMI LAURENTIIQUE
NECNON LEONIS X. PONT. MAX.
DIUTURNO STUDIO CONQUISITA
COLLEGIT
DISPOSUIT
IN DELICIIS HABUIT
ATQUE POSTERITATI COMMENDAT
GULIELMUS ROSCOE.
MDCCCXV.

years from this time the catalogue of this collection was published in a very different form, and under very different circumstances.

The rheumatic affection from which Mr. Roscoe suffered, prevented him from visiting Norfolk, a disappointment which he notices in the following letter to Dr. Smith, in which he also gives some account of the manner in which he passed his time during his illness.

"If I could have entertained the least hope or prospect of being able to undertake my promised excursion into Norfolk, I should not so long have delayed apprising you of it; but after having protracted writing from day to day, and from week to week, I am at length under the necessity of relinquishing, for the present, the pleasure I had so warmly anticipated, and consoling myself as well as I can under the pains of the rheumatism, which have of late left me little relaxation either by day or night.

"My spirits are, however, pretty good; and as I am fortunate enough to be able to sit up, and even walk about a little, I am seldom unemployed with objects either of business or amusement. Of the former, my operations at Chat Moss have engaged a great share of my attention, as I have promised some account of them to the Board of Agriculture, which this long confinement has given me the opportunity of drawing up. I have also done something

towards a catalogue of my pictures, drawings, prints, &c. which are become much more numerous since you saw them, and which I promise myself great pleasure in submitting, at no distant period, to your examination and criticism. Among these is the portrait of Leo X., with the Cardinals di Rossi and Giulio de' Medici, which I have been assured by several persons is the copy made by Andrea del Sarto from the celebrated picture of Raffaelle, and which was sent as the original to the Duke of Mantua, from whence it went to Parma, and was transferred with the rest of the collection to Capo di Monte, near Naples.

"You must, in all probability, have seen one of them, although you have not mentioned it in your travels, and will be able, perhaps, to clear up my conjectures.

"Another picture which I long to show you is a Madonna and Child, with St. Helena and St. Francis, by Don Ghirlandajo, the master of M. Angelo, painted, according to his custom, in distemper; but what constitutes its value is a freize, or history piece, below; the work of M. Angelo, when young; with strong indications of the great manner by which he afterwards distinguished himself.

"I hope before this time you will have received a copy of my review of Mr. Canning's speeches; if not, be so good as to say so when

you write, as I find several persons to whom I had ordered them have not received them. You will think me bold if not imprudent to render myself obnoxious to so powerful a party, both in politics and literature, as Canning and his friends, but after the abuse I have received from them and others, my susceptibility is somewhat diminished, and provided I could have done any good, I should have been very indifferent to whatever they might pour out against me.

"Throughout this troublesome complaint I had many sleepless hours at night, in some of which I strung verses together, which I wrote down in the morning, and of which I send you a specimen; which I beg you to present to Mrs. Smith with my kind remembrances. Should she approve of them, she will perhaps do me the favour of sending a copy to Miss Coke, whenever she may have an opportunity."

SONG,

On the Ball given by the friends of Mr. Brougham and Mr. Creevey. Liverpool, November, 1812.

The fair face of morning when sudden clouds cover,
And tempest and darkness envelope the day,
Shall the gloom of the moment deter the true lover
Who hastes to the home of his mistress away?

When heaved from its base proudly swells the vast ocean,
And danger rides high on the crest of the wave,
Undaunted the mariner views the commotion,
And bares his bold bosom the sea-storm to brave.

Then say, shall the Patriot e'er prove a recoiler?
Shall the champion of freedom e'er stoop to despair?
Shall he basely resign to the hands of the spoiler
The prize that high Heaven has consign'd to his care?

No! still to his task with fresh vigour returning,
He shall wage the bold war with corruption again,
As the lion, that, roused by the beam of the morning,
Shakes off the light dew-drops that hang on his mane.

If he falls—like the warrior he falls in his duty,
Whilst his country shall hail him and angels approve;
If he conquers—he wins from the bright hand of beauty
The wreath wove by Liberty, Friendship, and Love.

The design of writing the Life of Dr. Currie continued to engage the attention of Mr. Roscoe, as will appear from the following extract of a letter (May 22, 1814) addressed to Dr. Wright of Edinburgh:—

"It is true, my dear Sir, that a combination of circumstances, which it would be irksome to explain, but which, as you rightly judge, have chiefly arisen from my other importunate avocations, have hitherto prevented me from giving a memoir of our excellent friend; but it is no less true, that I have never for a moment faltered in my resolution of taking the first opportunity in my power of accomplishing it, and I am truly happy to say, that I have now a fair prospect of being shortly enabled to devote myself to it, with less interruption than at any former period. In the course of my narrative, and particularly on

medical subjects, which, however disqualified for, I cannot avoid touching upon, it is probable I may wish to avail myself of your kind and judicious advice, which I have no doubt will be given in the same friendly spirit which has dictated your letter to me. I shall also feel myself obliged and honoured by any communications you may have received since Dr. Currie's death, as to the result of the mode of treatment which your joint endeavours have been exerted to establish; and which, I am convinced, cannot, under proper management, be too highly appreciated." —"I have scarcely left myself room to say a word on our favourite study of botany; my attention to which has of late been confined to a narrow compass—the *Scitamineæ* tribe; on which I lately sent a paper to the Linnæan society, containing observations on Dr. Roxburgh's descriptions of them in the 11th vol. of the Asiatic Researches, which has, I find, been read; and if it should be printed, I shall take care to transmit you a copy."

The paper adverted to in the above letter to Dr. Wright, was published in the 11th volume of the Linnæan Society's Transactions; and in the same volume is inserted another communication from Mr. Roscoe, under the title, "On artificial and natural Arrangements of Plants, and particularly on the Systems of Linnæus and Jussieu."

In referring to the latter paper, he says, in a

letter to Dr. Smith.—"Be so good as to tell me, whether you have yet fired off my Congreve rocket against the French botanists. I hope not, as I think I could put some more combustibles into it. In particular, I think the distinction between a natural and artificial system might be more fully explained. In other respects, I have no objection to give them a broadside, and wish you could prevail upon both nations to confine their animosities within such harmless limits; but the business of cutting throats must go on, and seems even to be considered not as an accidental, but as a permanent state of society."

Another literary project entertained by Mr. Roscoe at this time, was a translation of the excellent work of Lanzi, "Storia pittorica della Italia." At his suggestion, his intimate friend, Dr. Traill, undertook the version of the work, which was to be accompanied by notes, and an introductory dissertation from the pen of Mr. Roscoe. This work was afterwards executed by one of his sons; but the preliminary dissertation is not appended to it.

During the present year, Mr. Roscoe was gratified by receiving intelligence of his having been elected an honorary member of the New York Historical Society.

It was about this period that Mr. Roscoe had an opportunity of frequently meeting and conversing with Mr. Robert Owen of Lanark; upon

whose system of education and schemes of society they had much discussion. The following letter fully displays Mr. Roscoe's opinions on these subjects.

"A perusal of your fourth essay, which you were so good as to leave with me last night, has confirmed in my mind the justice of the remarks which I took the liberty of making to you on the nature of your plans for public improvements, and the best method of carrying them into effect.

"There is in them so much practical excellence that I cannot without great regret see them united with projects, which, to many persons, must appear in the highest degree extravagant, and supported by arguments, which, to say the least, are often of questionable validity, and which cannot fail to offend all those persons upon whom your plans must depend for support.

"I have already stated to you, in explicit terms, where I conceive you must fix your boundary, if you expect success. These are,—

1. A particular Account of the Improvements at New Lanark, demonstrating the Effects of Education and Habit on the Lower Classes of Society, and the Facility with which they may be trained, without Severity, from a cheerful Infancy, to an industrious Manhood, and a happy old Age.

2. Directions in what Manner the Methods adopted at New Lanark may be best applied to similar Establishments in different Parts of the Kingdom.
3. An Enquiry how far the same Plan may be adapted to Manufactories of other Kinds, or to Establishments where great Numbers of people are employed.
4. A brief Statement of the Influence of Education and Habit on the Mind of Youth, and a Proposal for establishing national Schools of Education, in which shall be inculcated the general Principles of Morality and Benevolence, as well as the Intellectual Acquirements at present taught in the Schools of Bell and Lancaster.
5. An Enquiry into the best Means of affording Employment for the industrious, and relief for the disabled poor.
6. Observations on the Necessity of abolishing all Laws which tend to the Corruption of Morals and the Perpetration of Crimes, as inconsistent with the best Interests of Society.

"On all these points your writings contain many excellent remarks, and if you should be the means of establishing such improvements, you will have done the greatest good that ever any man conferred upon his country. But, when

abandoning these practicable reforms, you resort to theory, and insist upon it as a preliminary that all mankind shall alter their opinions and admit the new light that is descended suddenly upon them; and when you add to this the downfall of all existing establishments in church and state, you appear to me effectually to preclude the very possibility of success, and to convert into your strongest opponents those who would have been your warmest friends.

"I have endeavoured to compress what I have before said on this immense subject into as little space as possible, and have now only to entreat that you will excuse the freedom of my remarks, and will believe me, with real esteem," &c.

The interest which Mr. Roscoe felt in the improvement of the natives of Africa, was awakened this year by the appearance at Liverpool of one of that race, who had devoted himself to the extension of education amongst persons of his own colour. To talents of no ordinary kind Prince Sandars united considerable information, and exhibited a remarkable proof of what might be effected amongst the natives of Africa by due cultivation.

On his departure for London, Mr. Roscoe gave him letters of introduction to the Duke of Gloucester, as President of the African Institution, and to some others of his friends who were favourable to the cause of the Negroes;

and soon after his arrival in the metropolis, Mr. Roscoe received from him the following letter, curious as a specimen of African literature.

"Dear Sir, — It is with much heartfelt pleasure that I improve a moment for the acknowledgment of your kind attentions, to inform you of the convalescent state of my health, and also to let you know that I have relinquished the idea of going to Sierra Leone the ensuing fall, but shall go to the Island of St. Domingo, for the purpose of introducing the British system of education. I am inclined to think the climate equally favourable for the confirmation of my health, and the field for usefulness quite as extensive as that of Africa.

"I was very much pleased with your friend the Duke of Gloucester. It is extremely gratifying to find a person of his illustrious rank so habitually disposed to acts of benevolence and kind affection, as he appears to be. His Highness seemed very desirous that I should go out under the patronage of the Institution to Africa, and so did several other gentlemen; but others, who were members of the Church Mission Society, immediately introduced me to that society, as it were, before I was apprised of it. They have uniformly been, and still are solicitous in the extreme that I should engage with them for at least five years, which is a thing

which I could not (under existing circumstances) conscientiously perform.

"Messrs. Wilberforce, Macauley, and Stephen, have very cheerfully fallen in with the St. Domingo proposition, and seem disposed to give their most hearty encouragement. As there is no society organised for that object, they propose making up the money for the outfits and establishment of the school by voluntary contributions and subscriptions.

"As King Henry is so very desirous of having his subjects improved and instructed, we are very sanguine in the hope that he will immediately take it under the patronage of his government. Messrs. Wilberforce, Clarkson, and one or two other gentlemen, will give me letters to his majesty King Henry; and, if it would not be asking too much, I would solicit one from you, Sir, as a well-wisher to all mankind; and as one whom, I trust, will ever be numbered among the most indefatigable and zealous advocates for the emancipation, the moral and religious improvements and elevation of the characters and lives of the African race.

"I am, dear Sir, with sentiments of the highest consideration, &c.

"N. B. Please to give my best regards to Mrs. Roscoe and family."

Nor was this the only instance which occurred to Mr. Roscoe of the intelligence displayed by

the Negro race. A servant, who lived several years in his family, evinced a desire of learning and talents seldom seen in persons of his rank in life. He had acquired, without assistance, a considerable knowledge of the French language, and had mastered the rudiments of the Latin. Occasionally he ventured upon poetical compositions; and if his verses did not equal those of "John Jones," they were not without much merit, considering the circumstances under which they were produced.*

* The following curious specimens of African literature deserve to be recorded as the first dawnings of civilisation among the potentates of Guinea. They are letters addressed by African kings and chiefs to the master of a Liverpool vessel:—

"Dear friend Captn. Evritt,

"I let you know what make King Young Come on board for take is Coomey. And next Day you Cannot Send Boat for me to Come Down for my Coomey, then I been send Young Ego Down Yester, Day for you to Paid him my Coomey, then when he come home he Shew me Piece Paper, your copy my Coomey; then I send him down again to Day for you to Paid hime my Coomey, And my Family. And if you have any bob for Paid for that when you See me then we Settled. I remain you Friend

"Ego Honesty King Ebengo.

"Nov. 17, 1810."

"My Dear

"Sir I thank you if you gan spear me two Boxes Capper rods today, for to Pay Yampia Egbo, that I will Pay you Palm Oil for it in one Market, if you please, and send me answer

In the autumn of the present year (1814) the family of Mr. Roscoe derived great gratification

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may be you will halp me or not, because I want for send to Cricktown Yampia man to Come Down this morning. Do my friend halp me for that I am your Brother

" DUKE EPHRAIM."

" Dear friend

" Captain Everett Sir if you please Will Send me by Berer Some Rum to Drink for the River, be cause this be Great Market and Go for you. I am do in something to put for Canoe. That be reason I no come me Self to See you face, and but if you will please me that pritty chint I been keep power for you. Send me that you know. I been take 1 gun when I come home Tomorrow night we settled that I am beg you to send me that pritty chint because I want to Make good Market. If you will send to me—if you no will you may Left, I ask you that because I no want ask no thing for other Captain but you.

" TOBY TOM NARROW."

" Old Callabar, April 15, 1811.

" Dear Sir Old friend Thomas payne

" You may Try to Come you Self in Callabar to Make all Men pay you what the owe you. If you Done Come you Self, no Body mind to pay Captain that ded becous no see you face.

Better you Come you Self, then all men have Time will pay you all you palmoil. I sent this letter by Captain Everrett Ship Hope to Let you know, becous you be my old freind. I am very sorry, I no want you Loose all this money becous be Too much, you know this Country very well, If no See you for face, the no mind what they owe you My old friend. But now I help Captain Everrett very well. I am Sold him about 440 Crew of palmoil. I do that becous I know that Ship belonging to you Merchant there now.

from the society of Miss Aikin, who passed several weeks at Allerton. "I am almost inexcusable," says Mr. Roscoe in a letter to Dr. Aikin, "in not having sooner returned you my thanks for the pleasure you have afforded us in the society of Miss Aikin, which has certainly enlivened this old château beyond any thing which it has before known. Nothing will now satisfy us but

> — 'pomp and feast and revelry,
> With masque and antique pageantry.'

A few days since my eldest daughter's birthday was thus celebrated."

The celebration here alluded to was the performance of a little dramatic poem, in the form of a masque, written by various members of Mr. Roscoe's family*, and to which he contributed the part of "Peace," represented by his youngest

---

My big House I been bilded. I not done yet but I am Short for Glass becous all the Glass I have all very small. the no will fill for that House there. I am very much oblige you to Bring me three very Large Looking Glass 4 foot Long, and Marked my name. 3 fine Red Ensign 8 yard Long, Marked my name. if you will bring me that, first I do I will pay you for them thing before, and do nother thing. I have no more to Say but Give my Complement to all you family and all you friend

"Remain you friend
"TOBY TOM NARROW."

* Published in the second part of "Poems for Youth, by a Family Circle."

daughter. At the conclusion of these lines he thus adverts to his own ardent desire of peace, now at length gratified:—

"Joy, joy to earth, and joy to these
Who round my favour'd altar stand;
With chosen rites my presence grace,
And form for me the chosen band;
For well I know full many a sigh
From these green shades ascended high
That once again on earthly ground
My guileless footsteps might be found.
And lo! I come the world to bless
With lengthened years of happiness.
Nor shall my partial love disdain
For thee, fair nymph, to raise the strain,
But ever o'er thy favour'd head
My wings of guardian power I'll spread;
And pleased from thee no more to part,
Will place my altar in thy heart."

Amongst the strangers who occasionally visited Allerton, there were many whose attachment to art led them thither for the purpose of examining Mr. Roscoe's collections. Of the impression made upon their minds by these visits some idea may be formed from the ensuing letter addressed to Mr. Roscoe by a Roman artist.

"Allow me the honour and liberty of this, in order to thank you particularly for your politeness and liberal hospitality, that you were so pleased as to use to me, on Sunday the 19th inst.

"Sir, that day has been to me one of the finest day of my life: it was many years that I had n't experienced a such one!

"On Wednesday the 22d inst. I came in town, and I went to Mr. Douce, to whom I gave the best description, that was in my power, of your large collection of painting, sculpture, and prints, of which he was highly pleased and delighted.

"Sir, allow me to wish you joy and delight, and a long life to enjoy it, for you deserve it. And I hope your children will inherit from you the same taste for the Fine Arts, and the same kindness for the artists that you have to such an eminent degree; that even in your lifetime makes your person beloved and respected by every one.

"Sir, excuse the intrusion that I commit on your time that is too precious, as well as to excuse my poor English.

"I wish that you would have the goodness to remember me to all your amiable family, for their obliging politeness, and all your friends.

"Sir, I hope that you will favour me with an introduction to Mr. Othelly, as you were so kind as to tell me, and if you have something to send him, I shall be proud to be the bearer of it. And with the greatest esteem and respect,

"I am, Sir, &c. &c.

"CHRISTOPHER PROSPERI."

The taste of Mr. Roscoe for agricultural pursuits, which has been already alluded to, induced him to keep in his own hands the whole of the land surrounding his house at Allerton. The superintending of this farm afforded him much amusement and a healthful relaxation from his sedentary employments. He became a member of the Agricultural Society of West Derby, and occasionally communicated, to that body, papers connected with the objects of their meeting. It is interesting to observe how, even in these technical dissertations, the liberal and extended views which distinguish his other writings may be traced, and with what felicity he applied those principles of honesty and good faith which he had contended for in the intercourse of nation with nation, to the humbler relation of landlord and tenant. The following observations are extracted from a paper on "Farm-leases" read before the Society in the year 1810:—

"We must not, however, suppose that the conferring of such rewards is the sole, or even the chief object which an Agricultural Society should keep in view. Its efforts ought to be of a still higher kind: to inculcate just and liberal sentiments amongst those whose rank and influence in society are of the first importance; to introduce new and improved modes of cultivation suitable to the district; to discover in what

manner the respective interests of the landlord and tenant may best be secured, and to improve that intercourse and attachment between the different ranks of society which is equally honourable and advantageous to all.

"In order to accomplish these desirable objects it is evident that one of the first measures would be to ascertain the true nature of the connection between landlord and tenant, and to endeavour to establish such a basis as would be consistent with their mutual interest. * * * That the proprietor of an estate has a right to prescribe such conditions as he pleases as to the occupation of his land must be admitted, but at the same time a due regard to his own interest should lead him to consider the welfare of his tenant as inseparably connected with his own. He will, therefore, ask himself whether the conditions he prescribes are reasonable, and such as may enable a tenant to pay him the rent, which he stipulates to receive, and whether he has made it the interest of the tenant to improve the land by granting him a reasonable term of years, and allowing him proper facilities. If this has not been done, he may please himself with the idea of having stipulated to receive a rent for land, of the use of which he has deprived his tenant; but in the event he is the actual sufferer, the loss is finally his own, and

his endeavours have been employed only to impose upon himself."

The cultivation of Trafford and Chat Moss, which Mr. Roscoe had commenced in the year 1793, still continued to require his superintendence, and his occasional visits to that place for the purpose of witnessing the effect of various experiments he was making, were a source of much interest to him. The expense with which this undertaking was attended, rendered its success a matter of considerable importance to him, and he gladly availed himself of all the information which he could derive from persons who had been engaged in similar labours. Much of his correspondence with Sir John Sinclair referred to the improvement of moss lands; and he was induced, at the solicitation of that gentleman, to transmit to the Board of Agriculture an account of his mode of cultivation, which he accompanied with the following letter to Sir John, as President of the Board:—

"Herewith I have the honour to transmit you some account of my proceedings towards the improvement of Chat Moss, which I have to request you will have the goodness to lay before the Board of Agriculture, whenever it may suit your convenience.

"I confess I have not ventured to make the communication without considerable hesitation, being apprehensive that I may appear, in the

opinion of those who are much better acquainted with such subjects, to have acted too much upon my own judgment, and not to have availed myself sufficiently of the successful experiments made in other parts of the United Kingdom. I am also aware that the result I have stated cannot be considered as complete or satisfactory, and that it will yet require a few years to determine, with accuracy, the benefits to be derived from similar improvements. That under proper management these benefits would be very considerable I have, however, no doubt. I have, therefore, been induced to comply with the wishes of the Board, in giving the best account in my power, and shall at all times be happy to answer any other enquiries which they may do me the honour to make."

For this communication Mr. Roscoe received the thanks of the Board; and also of Sir John Sinclair:—"It does great credit," says the latter, "to your skill and zeal in the cause of agriculture, and will, I have no doubt, promote similar exertions in other public spirited individuals."

Several copies of this paper having been transmitted to Mr. Roscoe by the Board of Agriculture, he distributed them amongst his friends, from many of whom he received a very encouraging judgment as to the merits of his plan:—"I beg leave to return you my best thanks," says General Dirom, a gentleman who had been

engaged in a similar undertaking, "for the copy you have had the goodness to send me of your excellent and interesting Memoir on the improvement of Chat Moss. It is the greatest undertaking of the kind, I believe, in the kingdom, and your example may be expected to have great effect in exciting others to engage in similar laudable works, which may be expected to be attended with considerable advantage to themselves as well as to the public. You have, in my opinion, discovered a shorter, more simple, less expensive, and more effectual way of rendering moss land capable of producing a rotation of the best crops than any that has yet been practised."

Mrs. Barbauld, in her beautiful poem of "Eighteen Hundred and Eleven," has alluded, in the following lines, to the attempt made by Mr. Roscoe to bring this barren tract of land into cultivation:—

"Oft shall they seek some peasant's homely shed,
Who toils, unconscious of the mighty dead,
To ask where Avon's winding waters stray,
And thence a knot of wild flowers bear away;
Anxious enquire where Clarkson, friend of man,
Or all accomplished Jones his race began;
If of the modest mansion aught remains,
Where heaven and nature prompted Cowper's strains;
Where Roscoe, to whose patriot breast belong
The Roman virtue and the Tuscan song,
Led Ceres to the bleak and barren moor
Where Ceres never gain'd a wreath before."

In acknowledging the favour which Mrs. Barbauld had conferred upon him, by presenting to him her poem, Mr. Roscoe says, "I cannot avoid intruding on you with a few lines, to thank you for the present I lately received of your very beautiful poem, which I really fear is but too prophetic of the doom which awaits this infatuated country. If any thing could rouse the people from their lethargy it must be remonstrances like this, addressed to their feelings and their fears, for as to all appeals to their reason and judgment, they are entirely disregarded, or seem rather only to harden them more in their iniquities. It is with great pleasure that I perceive in this poem the same spirit of benevolence, the same extensive and enlightened views, and the same true poetical feeling that uniformly distinguish your other writings; but the conclusion of it from the passage beginning, 'There walks a spirit,' is peculiarly new and grand, and has not, in my judgment, been exceeded by any poetical personification that I have met with. To have my name recorded in such a poem is, in my estimation, the greatest honour that could have been conferred on me, and will be more durable than any that brass or marble could bestow."

Amongst the various persons to whom Mr. Roscoe's agricultural tastes were the means of introducing him, were G. Tollett, Esq., of Betley

Hall, Staffordshire, and George Wilbraham, Esq. of Delamere Lodge, Cheshire. With the former he corresponded frequently on the subject of his improvements at Chat Moss, at which place he had the pleasure, in the course of the year 1810, of receiving a visit from him. In the following year he was warmly pressed to return this visit at Betley, where, in addition to the pleasure of viewing the ingenious agricultural inventions of Mr. Tollett, he was promised the high gratification of being introduced to the personal acquaintance of Mr. Coke of Norfolk. Unfortunately the numerous claims upon his time did not permit him to take advantage of this friendly invitation.

"I went from hence," says Mr. Wilbraham, in a letter dated 17th Dec. 1811, and addressed to Mr. Roscoe, "with Mr. Coke to Mr. Tollett's, and was in great hopes of meeting you there, as was Mr. Coke, who has commissioned me to say he shall be very happy to see you at Holkham, when his meeting takes place, generally about the 20th June. Indeed, the various and excellent husbandry that is seen there cannot fail to be highly satisfactory to a lover of farming improvements, and the communications obtained from the variety of persons who attend the meeting are a most pleasing addition to the practical part.

"I think you would have been much gratified

at Mr. Tollett's. His farm yards and buildings are singular, ingenious, and useful. The advantage taken of a small hill, by making it a straw yard, with two stories surrounding it with sheep and cattle above each other under one roof, is a scheme of economy. His water-wheel is most excellent; threshes the corn and winnows it, and is intended to grind and dress it; cuts the straw, and is meant to churn and to wash linen; and after the stream has performed all these offices it will irrigate land worth about 3*l.* an acre, the value of which it will treble. Could I adequately describe all I saw at Betley you might be tempted to view it, and this is the season when cattle and sheep are in the yards. I feel more anxious that you should see these wonders for a selfish reason, for this place is directly in your road, and I shall be happy to hear how Chat Moss goes on. If on this or on any other occasion I can tempt you to come here, I shall be most happy to see you."

The invitation from Mr. Coke to visit Holkham, conveyed to Mr. Roscoe in the preceding letter, was repeated through several of their mutual friends. Sir J. E. Smith, in a letter dated 7th September, 1812, adds his own anxious solicitations, and thus endeavours to prevail upon Mr. Roscoe to accept the invitation, by recounting the literary treasures of Holkham:—

"We have been spending ten days at Holk-

ham, and I write now at the earnest desire of Mr. Coke to try to persuade you to come and see him and us. He says you have given him some hopes, but have as yet only disappointed him. Now I can conceive nothing more delightful than spending a fortnight with you under this roof, and have promised him to do so, whenever you come. To contemplate his pictures and statues, to rummage amongst his books, drawings, manuscripts, and prints (where we every day find treasures unknown before), is extremely agreeable, and he kindly entrusts all his keys to me in full confidence. I found a case of the *earliest* printed books, which no one had examined since the time of his great uncle, Lord Leicester. Such MSS. of Dante, drawings of the old Italian masters, treasures of European history—you have no idea! The house is one of the finest in Europe, and its riches are inexhaustible. But of all things its owner is the best worth your seeing and knowing. He is so amiable, with all the *first gloss* of human affection and feeling upon his heart; so devoid of all selfishness, that with the early and constant prosperity he has experienced, his character is next to a miracle; and he has such an agreeable liveliness and playfulness of manners, that nobody is more entertaining. You would exactly suit, in all your ideas of men and things. Do give me some hopes that you will

come over this autumn with Mrs. Roscoe, or some of your family. We will meet at Holkham; and if you can descend (without breaking your neck) to our 'low estate,' we will strive to rival even Holkham in the heartiness of our welcome. I shall show you the Linnæan reliques, and we shall consult you about a new Botanic Garden now projecting. Do, my dear friend, think of all this."

"And now, my dear friend," says Mr. Roscoe in reply—"for your last letter—

> "So cunning was the apparatus,
> The powerful pot-hooks did so move him,
> That, will he, nill he, to *the great house*
> He went as if the devil drove him.

"It would not, however, be so much for the sake of the great house, nor for all it contains, though nothing in its way could be more attractive, that I wish to visit Holkham. It would be with the view of paying my respects to its excellent and distinguished owner, and of meeting you under his roof,—temptations which I feel I shall hardly be able to resist. At present, however, I cannot speak very decisively. Neither my wife nor myself are at present very well, and when I shall be able to venture abroad so far before winter, I really dare not say. Mrs. Roscoe and I ought to have gone to Hafod this year; but the same causes rendered it impossible."

Two years afterwards he was again urged to visit Mr. Coke, and with better success.

"I had intended," says Sir James Smith (October 3. 1814), "writing to you a few days since, but many things have prevented me. I hope I am still time enough for the main purpose of my letter, which is to make another attempt, at the desire of Mr. Coke, to induce you to visit Holkham. We have spent a delightful fortnight there lately, and two hours almost every day were devoted to an examination of the manuscripts. I am going there on Monday with our good bishop, for a few days, for the express purpose of looking further into these treasures, and if you would join us, you would complete the joy of the whole party.

"I must tell you a part of our discoveries: besides beautifully illuminated MSS. on vellum of many of the Latin classics, a most exquisite Boccacio, a very fine and old Dante, a Chronique d'Henault, in two immense folios, richly illuminated, and other valuable things of that kind, there is a very valuable collection of historical Italian MSS., fairly copied at Florence, Venice, &c., for Lord Leicester; and there are partial or local chronicles, memoirs, &c., *very curious.* Amongst others is a complete copy of Burchard's Diary. This delectable treasure will surely tempt you of itself. I think you know nothing of it but what Gordon has printed:—am I right in this?"

There is one original monastic chronicle itself of the date of 1300 or 1400. There are also many things which we want you to tell us the value of. The printed books are inestimable in value and number."

At length, no longer able to resist his own inclinations and the kind solicitations of his friends, he paid his long wished for visit to Holkham in the autumn of the year 1814. His reception was most gratifying to his feelings, and the society which he found assembled there most congenial to his taste. In addition to Sir James Smith, Dr. Parr had been invited to meet him; and some other persons, distinguished by their literary attainments, were of the party. With several of the latter Mr. Roscoe now, for the first time, became personally acquainted, and contracted with many of them a sincere friendship. This was the origin of his intimacy with Mr. Dawson Turner of Yarmouth, for whom he ever afterwards entertained the highest esteem, and who, in the latter part of his life, was one of his most frequent and valuable correspondents. In the society of this gentleman and his family, at Yarmouth, he some years afterwards passed a few days; a visit to which he always adverted with lively expressions of pleasure.

No sooner was Mr. Roscoe established at Holkham than he entered upon the most in-

teresting task of exploring the literary treasures of the place. Accompanied by Dr. Parr, Sir J. E. Smith, and several other of the visiters, he proceeded to the upper library, an apartment at the top of the house, where, in consequence of their unsightly condition, the collection of manuscripts, and many of the rare printed books were deposited.

These inestimable treasures had been collected chiefly in Italy in the early part of the last century, by Thomas Coke, Lord Lovel, and afterwards Earl of Leicester, the great uncle of the present possessor of Holkham. With much trouble and expense he amassed, while abroad, a great collection of works of art, manuscripts, and early printed books; but unfortunately, after their arrival in England, the MSS. were never properly arranged. Their value was little known, nor indeed were they in a fit state to be placed upon the shelves of a library. Few of them had been consulted by scholars, with the exception of seven remarkably fine manuscripts of Livy, which had been lent by Lord Lovel to Drakenborch, who has given an account of them in his edition of that historian, dedicated to his lordship. A partial examination into the manuscripts had been made by Sir J. E. Smith and some other gentlemen, before Mr. Roscoe's visit; but the greater part of them still remained undisturbed.

In the course of his inquiries, Mr. Roscoe was delighted to find many volumes of extreme rarity and value. Amongst these the most remarkable was a volume of original drawings, by Raffaelle, of the architectural remains of ancient Rome, executed at the desire of Leo X., and mentioned by Camolli, in his life of the painter, as having been in the possession of "Tomaso Coke, Lord Leicester." Of this inestimable treasure some account had been given by Mr. Roscoe, in his life of Leo X. "That I should have had," he observes in a letter to Mr. Coke, "the good fortune of seeing and turning over at my leisure such a book, is almost incredible." Another manuscript of nearly equal value was a treatise, written on paper, by the hand of Leonardo da Vinci, *alla mancina*, or from right to left, so that it can only be read with ease by the assistance of a mirror. The subject is a dissertation "on the nature, weight, and force of water," explained by numerous drawings on the margin, from the pen of the artist himself. But the production which most interested Mr. Roscoe was a superb copy of Livy, which had been the property of Alfonso, King of Naples, to whom it was presented by Cosmo de Medici, *pater patriæ*, on the establishment of peace between Florence and Naples. Alfonso's physicians insinuated that the volume was poisoned; but the king, disregarding their suspicions, began

with great pleasure the perusal of the work. It appears to be annotated by the king's own hand, and, amongst its subsequent possessors, once belonged to the celebrated Justus Lipsius. Another work of high value was a "History of the Councils," by Fra Paolo Sarpi (Father Paul), which has never been published. Amongst many copies of the sacred writings was a very remarkable manuscript of the Pentateuch, in Hebrew, on deer skins, forming a roll thirty-eight feet in length, supposed by competent judges to be an Eastern transcript of high antiquity. To these may be added several unpublished manuscripts of Chief Justice Coke. These were only the gems of the collection, which included a variety of beautiful classical MSS., rare works of Italian history and poetry (amongst which were several copies of Dante), various English MSS., of much curiosity, and numerous other volumes, the rarity of which was often equalled by their beauty.

Mr. Roscoe was gratified beyond expression at the opportunity of examining at his leisure so rich and various a collection of literary treasures, and immediately offered his services in arranging them. It was necessary, however, that the whole of the volumes should pass through the hands of the binder, and he therefore recommended that they should be placed under the care of the late Mr. John Jones of Liverpool. By this arrangement the volumes would again come

under his own eye, and he would have an opportunity of stating, in a short note to each, the nature of its contents and its probable value.

The manuscripts, many of which had been stripped of their covers previously to their importation from the continent, and some of which had been considerably injured, required the greatest skill and care in the binding. Fortunately, they could not have fallen into abler hands. The taste and ingenuity displayed by Mr. Jones*, to whom they were confided, could only be equalled by the zeal with which he devoted himself to the task. Many of the manuscripts being defaced with *creases*, he invented a very simple but ingenious mode of restoring the pages, by stretching them in a frame, and covering the injured parts with a solution of vellum.

The judicious, tasteful, and solid style, in which Mr. Jones executed his task, excited the admiration of all Mr. Coke's literary friends. Amongst others, Mr. George Wilbraham thus

* Mr. Jones, after having given up his laborious occupation of a bookbinder, was appointed librarian of the Athenæum at Liverpool; nor is it possible that a more diligent and efficient person could any where have been found. The library under his superintendance was a model of order, neatness, and arrangement. He had been long acquainted with Mr. Roscoe, and entertained for him feelings of the most devoted attachment and respect. He was a man of strong natural powers of mind, and of an original character. His son, Mr. William Roscoe Jones, has succeeded his father as librarian, and is an excellent officer to the institution.

speaks of his labours, in a letter to Mr. Roscoe, from Holkham:—

"From no other place could I with more propriety address you, than from one which you are so eminently contributing to distinguish and adorn, by arranging and new clothing the precious MSS. which belong to it; and thus adding a new honour to the possessor of it, already raised above his fellows by so many eminent and amiable qualities. It has been the wish of my life, for these last twenty-four years that I have had the good fortune to live with Mr. Coke in habits of the closest intimacy and friendship, to have this object set about. Judge, then, of the pleasure I have, in seeing this great desideratum in a way of being speedily accomplished, and so as to reflect the highest honour on the very intelligent superintendant to whom it has been confided. The cheapness with which you do it astonishes not me alone, but Lord Spencer, perhaps the most conversant person in England in the price of bookbinding. There is no binding that we should not have estimated at one half more; and many at double what you have paid for the nice repairing, mending, and binding."

The gratification which Mr. Coke felt on seeing his valuable collection thus, as it were, restored to him, is expressed in the following letter to Mr. Roscoe:—

"Without compliment, I verily believe, there

is not another man in the kingdom to be found equal to yourself, or capable, indeed, of undertaking so laborious and great a work as that which you have so kindly volunteered. Is it then possible to imagine me capable of refusing so singular an opportunity as now presents itself, in committing to your care all my manuscripts, one after another, enhanced as they must be in value after passing through your hands? To say how much I am indebted to you, and delighted with those you have returned, is quite impossible; it only makes me every hour of my life more impatient to have them all rebound and examined.

"I did not delay a moment after my arrival in looking them over, and the moment I had done so, I mounted into the upper library, to select as many as would refill the box, which I sent, addressed to you at Liverpool, yesterday, containing thirty-two books, many of which you will find it necessary to divide into separate volumes."

Nothing can give a more pleasing picture of Mr. Roscoe's visit to Holkham than the following little poem, in which he has celebrated both the literary and social pleasures with which that celebrated mansion abounds: —

" HOLKHAM.

" Where Holkham rears in graceful pride
Her marble halls and crested towers,
And stretches o'er the champain wide
Her lengthened suite of social bowers;

" Where, led by LEICESTER's forming hand,
To Nature Art her succour gives,
Touches the desert with her wand,
And sculpture breathes, and painting lives;

" There, 'midst the tomes around me spread,
The spoils of learning's prosperous day,
As once I prest my sleepless bed,
I heard a voice that seemed to say—

" ' Yes, days, and weeks, and months have past,
And on thee closed the changeful year,
Yet still the powerful motives last
That led thy willing footsteps here;

" Delighted, thro' the fleeting hours,
The mouldering volume to explore,
And waste thy time, thy health, thy powers,
On the dull page of ancient lore;

" Resolved, by all his threats unaw'd,
With Time the warfare to renew,
And with officious zeal defraud
Thy brother book-worm of his due.

" And wouldst thou to this cultur'd age
Restore the school-man's endless theme?
Recall the bigot's fiery page?
The jurist's web, the statesman's dream?

"Far happier, if the useless toil
A darkling age so long admired,
Had served to add to Omar's pile,
And in the general blaze expired.'

"'Cease, slanderer, cease that voice profane,'
(Indignant thus I quick replied),
'Nor dare to wake the honoured train
That silent slumber at my side.

"For though they breathe not, yet they live,
Though tongueless, mingle mind with mind,
And through succeeding ages give
One great censorium to mankind;

"A power divine, that still shall last
Beyond the brutes' precarious doom,
Combines the future with the past,
And bids us live beyond the tomb.'

"Then blest the hand, and blest the day
That led me to your haunts divine,
To share your loved retreat, and pay
My homage at your sacred shrine.

"Shelter'd beneath this friendly dome,
Far from the world's tumultuous rage,
I ope the venerated tome,
And read, and glow along the page;

"Or, wrapt in dreams of ages old,
O'er time triumphant seem to stand,
Whilst I th' historic volume hold,
Once held by great ALFONSO's hand;

"Or, sunk in learning's calm retreat,
Midst scenes remote from vulgar eyes,
I trace the weakness of the great,
And mark the follies of the wise;

"How Poggio's tale attention drew
From pontiffs proud and grave divines,
Or Cosmo smoothed his wrinkled brow
O'er Beccatelli's playful lines;

"With joy the rescued volume see,
Where Sarpi wakes the patriot soul,
And the bright glance of liberty
Shot from beneath the monkish cowl.

"—But when the studious hours decline,
And tired attention wakes no more,
Then, idly busy be it mine
Upon the pictured page to pore!

"Where rude designs of earlier days
Their bright unchanging hues unfold,
And all th' illumin'd margins blaze
With azure skies, and stars of gold;

"Where on the solemn page intrude
Figures grotesque, and emblems quaint,
And monsters of infernal brood
Grin scornful at the preaching saint.

"But see, where Giotto's purer ray,
Emerging from the gothic night,
Drives the fantastic shapes away,
And brings his chaster forms to light;

"Forms, worthy in devotion's eye,
The sacred volume to adorn,
Where, wondering, we may yet descry
The dawn of Raffaelle's brighter morn.

"Nor yet let him, whose love of art
To Holkham's halls his steps has led,
Refuse his homage, or depart,
Till here his pilgrim vows are paid;

"For here the sacred leaves expand,
That once (such mighty Leo's will)
Have rested under RAFFAELLE's hand,
And bear the impress of his skill.

"And here DA VINCI's genius strives
Through nature's works to trace the cause,
The water's rapid course describes—
Its weight, its current, and its laws.

"But happier far the moments fly,
When, resting from my lengthen'd toil,
I meet with COKE's benignant eye,
And share his kind approving smile;

"Friend of his country and mankind,
To more than titled honours born;
Who looks with independent mind
On all the venal tribe with scorn.

"His the firm soul to freedom true,
The open heart, the liberal hand,
That from the rock the waters drew,
And bade the bounteous stream expand,

"To clothe the plain with brighter green,
The soil with richer harvests bless,
And pour on all the cultured scene
The glow of life and happiness:

"—Not with scant hand the pittance small
To starving industry to give;
But grant their general rights to all,
And as he lives, let others live;

"And sees, with all a parent's pride,
His healthful village train display'd,
To heal the wounds in nature's side,
By tyrants and by heroes made."

The feelings of affectionate regard and sincere esteem which Mr. Roscoe's visit to Holkham created in the mind of Mr. Coke, may be best learned from the letters of the latter to Sir J. E. Smith:—

"I cannot," he says, "forward the enclosed, which reached me by yesterday's post, without acknowledging all your friendly assistance, and expressing the great pleasure afforded me by your own and Mr. Roscoe's visit.

"The more I saw of him the more I was delighted with the benevolence of his mind, the rectitude and liberality of his principles, as well as with his superior acquirements."*

Soon after his visit to Holkham, Mr. Roscoe presented to his friend a large paper copy of his "Life of Leo X.," in which he inscribed to him the following sonnet: —

"Though, clothed in varnish'd vest and trick'd with gold,
To HOLKHAM's splendid halls thou take thy way,
Think not, my book, that this thy proud display
Will aught avail thee. There shalt thou behold
The speaking train of bards and sages old,
Immortal sons of Learning's happier day,
And own that thou amidst their bright array
Art all unworthy to be there enrolled.
There, then, abashed, at modest distance lie,
Till he, the master, with benignant eye
Shall o'er thy leaves in pleased attention bend;
Enough, if, firm to truth and freedom's cause,
He find thee worthy of his kind applause,
And in the *Author* recognise the *Friend*."

* Life of Sir J. Smith, vol. ii. p. 354.

In the following letter to Sir James Smith, Mr. Coke thus expresses his gratification on receiving the volumes:—

"'Leo X.,' most magnificently bound, made his appearance yesterday, and will be more highly prized than any manuscript in my possession. To you I may fairly say I am more particularly indebted for this most inestimable gift; I should probably never have known Mr. Roscoe, if it had not been for your kindness in bringing us together; it has established a mutual regard between us, which I am satisfied will be pleasing to us during the remainder of our respective lives. To say the truth, he is a most extraordinary personage; such a head, such a heart, such suavity of disposition, such courage in the pursuit of what is right, such pure philanthropy are seldom combined in one individual; imagine, then, my dear Sir, the store I shall set by the present of his book. How preferable such a testimony of esteem from such a man, to the baubles which may be derived to a cringing sycophant from a profligate court! If I live and have my health, I will do myself the pleasure of passing a few days with him at Allerton in September or October next. Could not you accompany me? I will not keep you from home more than five or six weeks."

Amongst the distinguished persons with whom his visit to Norfolk made Mr. Roscoe acquainted

was the venerable and patriotic Bishop of Norwich. To an invitation from Sir James Smith to meet Mr. Roscoe at his house, that excellent prelate made the following reply:—

"I feel, if possible, more proud of being indebted to your friendly partiality for the favourable opinion which Mr. Roscoe is so good as to entertain of me, than I do even of his approbation; and yet the esteem of such a man is a source of higher gratification than any which it is in the power of kings or ministers to bestow. Many thanks for your kind invitation. To wait on you, and to meet Mr. Roscoe, are certainly very great temptations; for men like him are rare beings:—

"'Numero vix sunt totidem quot,
Thebarum portæ, vel divitis ostia Nili.'

Old as I am, I cannot therefore but feel anxious to say before I die, '*Virgilium vidi.*' Adieu."

But amidst all the literary pleasures and splendid hospitalities of Holkham, the recollection of his own tranquil home was still present to the mind of Mr. Roscoe, and the joy which his restoration to it afforded him is expressed in the following stanzas, addressed to Mrs. Roscoe, on his return:—

"THE RETURN.

"December 17th, 1814.

"In search of amusement abroad if we wander,
Novel scenes for a while may the senses decoy,
But short the delight their attractions can render,
If wedded affection partake not the joy.
Without the loved bosom to share each transaction,
'Tis in vain that to distance for pleasure we roam;
For the magnet still turns towards the source of attraction,
And the heart, tho' long travelled, still points to its home.

"O Home! how delightful thy tranquil enjoyments,
When again on thy hearth the tired limbs are reclined;
When wearied no longer with restless employments,
We resign to calm pleasures the indolent mind!
O! moments of bliss, when all thronging around me,
I see the bright faces with pleasure more bright;
Whilst one 'midst the rest more rejoiced to have found me,
Glows with warmer emotions, with deeper delight.

"Thus, down from the mountains some rivulet gushing,
O'er the precipice steep gives its current to flow,
In eddies now swept, now in cataracts rushing,
Till it reaches at length the calm valley below;
There, tormented no more by its vagrant meanders,
Its fugitive waves seem delighted to rest,
O'er its placid expanse not a breath of air wanders,
And heaven smiles serene in the calm of its breast."

The visit to Holkham was repaid by Mr. Coke in the autumn of 1815, when several of the distinguished persons who had assembled at Holkham in the preceding year were invited to meet him at Allerton. Amongst these was Dr. Parr,

who, on his return to Hatton, expressed, in the following letter, the gratification which he had derived from his visit:—

"And now, dear Sir, I must entreat you and Mrs. Roscoe to accept my warm and unfeigned thanks for the hospitable and friendly reception with which you honoured me at Allerton. To the latest hour of my life shall I remember my tour with joy, and even triumph. Within the same space of time never was so much happiness, intellectual and moral, crowded upon my mind. Within the same circuit of space I never met with so many enlightened and interesting companions. As I lay great stress on all the little courtesies which endear man to man, I beg you will remember me, in strong terms of tenderness and respect, to Mrs. and Misses Roscoe, and your sons; to Mr. and Mrs. Martin, and their little ones; to Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd; to Dr. Bostock, Dr. Traill, &c. &c. &c."

CHAPTER XIV.

1816.

Pecuniary embarrassments of Mr. Roscoe.—Letter to Mr. M'Creery.—General meeting of creditors.—Report of the committee.—Settlement of the affairs undertaken by Mr. Roscoe.—Sonnet, expressing his feelings at this time.—Sympathy of his friends.—Letter from Sir J. E. Smith.—Sale of his library, pictures, &c.—Sonnet on parting with them.—Sonnets addressed to him.—Catalogue of the library prepared—its principal contents.—The sale of the books.—Purchase of books by his friends for his use.—Mr. Shepherd's letter.—Mr. Roscoe's reply.—Books presented to the Athenæum.—Sale of the prints—description of them.—Sale of pictures and drawings—their nature and value.—Picture of Leo X., with the Cardinals Giulio de' Medici and Rossi.—Its history—attributed to Andrea del Sarto.—Madonna and Child by Ghirlandajo, with a frieze by Michelagnolo.—Pictures by Fuseli.—Painting of the death of Lorenzo de' Medici by him.—Letters from him respecting it.—Purchased by an unknown person, and presented to Mr. Roscoe.—Series of pictures bought by several gentlemen and presented to the Athenæum.—Letter from Mr. Singer.—John Gibson, the sculptor—letter from him.—Mr. Roscoe's reply.—Letter from Mr. Gibson at Rome.—He presents a bust of Mr. Roscoe to the Liverpool Royal Institution.—Mr. Reynolds of Bristol—his death.—Letter to Mr. W. Rathbone on that occasion, and to Mrs. Rathbone.—Verses to his memory.

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CHAPTER XIV.

"IT is only on occasions that deeply affect our feelings and our happiness, that the character of our minds is fully unfolded."* One of these trying occasions now occurred in the life of Mr. Roscoe, when he was called upon to sustain a distressing reverse of fortune, — to see himself and all his family connections thrown at once upon the resources of their own personal exertions; and after the most determined and anxious efforts to retrieve his affairs, protracted to a period of upwards of four years, to witness the termination of them in bankruptcy.

Owing to various circumstances, amongst which may be reckoned the investment of considerable sums of money in landed and mining property, much difficulty was experienced at the end of the year 1815, by the banking-house in which Mr. Roscoe was a partner. The opening of the American trade had been the means of creating a great demand for capital, and this, co-operating with other circumstances, produced a

* Life of Pope.

scarcity of cash. Great exertions were made in the course of the winter to prevent the apprehended inconveniences—exertions which would in all probability have been successful, had not the distrust of numerous creditors been excited; as a natural consequence of which, large balances were suddenly withdrawn from the bank. This circumstance was decisive; and after struggling for a few days, in the hope of being still able to maintain their ground, the partners, on the 25th of January, suspended their payments. This event was communicated by Mr. Roscoe himself to several of the customers of the house; and amongst others, to his friend, Mr. M'Creery, in the following letter:—

"My dear Friend,

"You will judge what the state of my mind must be, when I am compelled to announce to you, that from an unremitting demand upon our bank for several days, we have this day been obliged to suspend our payments, in order to prevent an unjust preference of those who were most clamorous in their demands.

"In this distressing situation my sole consolation is, that *the funds of the house are sufficiently ample for all demands upon us*, if our creditors do not by any severe or hasty measures prevent us from availing ourselves of them, which I have reason to believe will not be the case.

"God bless you, my dear old friend, in your peaceful and laborious occupation. May you be justly sensible of the blessings of your happy lot in the bosom of an affectionate family, and never experience the unfortunate fate and deep anxiety of your ever faithful and affectionate friend,

"W. R."

It now became a momentous question, under what direction and in what manner the affairs of the house should be wound up. Contrary to the advice of many of his friends, who recommended that he should at once exonerate himself from such a burden, Mr. Roscoe resolved that he would, with the consent of the creditors, undertake the arrangement of the affairs himself. A general meeting of the creditors,—a very numerous body, was called, at which Mr. Roscoe attended, and explained to them at length the state of the concern. This meeting afforded a striking proof of the estimation in which his character was held, the conclusion of his address being attended with a general applause.

A committee of seven gentlemen was appointed at this meeting, to inquire into the state of the concern, and to make a report to the creditors. After a patient and minute investigation, and after taking the opinion of skilful persons with regard to the value of the various property belonging to the partners, these gentlemen re-

ported, that the house was solvent; and that, after payment of all the debts of the concern, there would remain a balance of £61,144. The general meeting of the creditors called to receive this report adopted it; and came to this resolution;—"that there were funds sufficient to pay all the debts, with interest."

Under these circumstances, Mr. Roscoe rightly considered himself not only justified in maintaining the superintendence of his affairs, but imperatively called upon not to suffer the interests of the creditors to be committed to any other hands. He immediately drew up and issued a plan, by which he proposed, that the house should be allowed six years, in the course of which period the whole of the debts, with interest, would be discharged. To this proposal the assent of a great majority of the creditors was obtained. In taking this course, he was well aware of the great responsibility attending it, and of the harassing and distressing situation in which it might place him, but the hope of ultimately discharging all the demands upon the house, and a firm conviction that he was acting for the benefit of the creditors, prompted and sustained him in his resolution. Writing to one of his friends at this time, he says:—

"In the present state of things, it will be long before the principal can be wholly paid, but the greater part will be discharged in two or three

years; and as both principal and interest will be eventually paid to the very last farthing, I hope our friends will be satisfied, and that when I am called for, I may lay down my bones to rest in peace. In the mean time I keep up my health and spirits, and prepare myself to meet whatever may be destined for me with a conscience clear of offence, and with increased affection to those long tried friends who have accompanied me in adversity as well as in prosperity, and amongst whom you will ever be numbered."

In a letter to another friend, he says, "I cannot for a moment delay my grateful acknowledgments for your most affectionate and welcome letter received this morning, and for the encouraging observations it contains, which, I assure you, have arrived at a time when they are peculiarly applicable and useful, as giving me additional courage and confidence in a line of conduct from which I have already perceived the best effects; and which, if persevered in, will yet, I trust, before I die, restore me in the estimation, not only of my dear and partial friends, but of the public. When I first professed my resolution to retain the management of our concerns, and continue our business, it was treated, even by those the nearest connected with us, as impossible and chimerical, and I was strongly pressed on all sides to resign the affairs into other hands, if not by the usual process of law, at least by a

trust deed. This I resisted, and chose rather to throw myself on the good will of the creditors at large, to explain matters to them *vivâ voce*, and show them how our interests were inseparably connected, than to have our estates and property torn in pieces—*they* deprived of a great part of our debts, and *we* of any surplus which might remain for ourselves and our families. More unanimity was, perhaps, never seen at *such* a meeting; only one person expressed his private dissent, and he has since acceded to the plan proposed. In the mean time our bank has never been shut; we have re-established our connection with the very safe house of Jones, Loyd, & Co.; we have fresh deposits lodged with us, and we draw bills on our own account. For the purpose of separating this from our former concern, and of obtaining additional assistance in our bank, we are negotiating to take into partnership a very respectable young man, who was brought up with us, and on whose diligence and integrity we have a perfect reliance. When this alteration is made, we have received assurances from many of our friends, that they will resume their transactions with us."

The devotion of heart and mind with which Mr. Roscoe applied himself to the accomplishment of the proposed plan of liquidating the debts of the bank was such, that neither by day nor by night was it absent from his thoughts.

Many of the most important arrangements for the settlement of these affairs were projected and resolved upon, as he lay in the silence of night, unable to sleep. To accomplish this great object of his wishes seemed to be the sole aim of his life.

It was during this season of painful and almost overpowering exertion of mind and of body, that the following sonnet bears date.

"I wake, and lo! the morning's earliest gleam
Salutes my eyes. What joy to many a heart
Its renovated lustre shall impart!
—But not to mine; for from its brightening beam
Gladly would I some intermission claim;
And, anxious, at its near approach I start
Like one when called, unwilling to depart,
Depressed his spirit and unnerved his frame.
—Yes—like some wanderer who has lost his way,
In life's rude paths I long have gone astray,
And for the future fear. O God of love!
What this day may bring forth is all to me
Unknown; but oh! where'er my course may be
Do thou my steps direct, my toils approve."

That Mr. Roscoe was, in the end, unable to accomplish all that he had proposed to himself, was the result of circumstances over which he had no control. The necessity of making the payments to the creditors by periodical instalments compelled the partners to force a sale of their property at times very unfavourable to such transactions,—the value of landed and other pro-

perty fell,—some of the mines in which they were interested turned out to be of less value than the report of the very skilful person* by whom they had been examined had led them to believe. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, Mr. Roscoe resolutely persisted in his endeavours, and, under his directions, large payments were made to the creditors. That at length he was compelled, as will be hereafter stated, to surrender the management of his affairs, was a circumstance which he never ceased to regret.

The intelligence of his failure was received with deep sympathy by his numerous friends, and some strenuous efforts were made, especially by one†, who had been long and warmly attached to him, to procure such assistance as might enable the house to meet their engagements, and at once to resume their station in the commercial world. Those efforts, however, failed of success; nor was there such a disposition evinced towards him in the town of Liverpool, as induced Mr. Roscoe to hope for any extraneous assistance. Many commercial houses have doubtless been supported under greater difficulties.

Amongst the many consolatory and supporting communications which Mr. Roscoe received at this time from his friends, was the following most kind letter from Sir James Smith:—

* Mr. Buddle. † Mr. M'Creery.

"The afflicting letters I have from my brother and sister Martin so alarmed and overwhelmed me at first sight, that when I read them and found that nothing had affected the life or health of you and Mrs. Roscoe, I could bear any thing else. How wide are the evils attendant on these wars, which you will ever have the consolation of knowing you have done all you could to prevent. We have all said, as you know, that the struggle would be when peace came. I was well aware that you felt no trifling alarm or solicitude when I was with you. If the whole commercial world feels the shock, how could you hope to avoid it? You have now to experience, more than you ever could in prosperity, how extensively you are respected and beloved. I feel, my honoured friend, that you will rise above this calamity. And your children, to whom you have imparted more precious treasures than all worldly prosperity could bestow, and which can never be taken from them, will now find their own strength; and derive happiness, support, and importance, from sources which they could never have been aware of, but for such an event. I feel confident that unexpected sources of comfort will present themselves; and that, in the common shock, your character, your abilities, and your connections must bear you up.

"You will readily believe that we and many

others here shall be anxiously solicitous to hear how you all are, and how things are likely to turn out. You cannot tell at once. Do not look too much on the dark side, but take time to consider every thing. I do not ask you to write, till you feel an inclination to do so. My brother Martin will tell us how every thing goes on; you may rely on his unchangeable respect and esteem. *These*, he says in his last letter to me, are such as he cannot express. Farewell, my ever loved and honoured friend, — recall us most affectionately to the remembrance of Mrs. Roscoe, and every one of your family. You may be sure we shall be ever thinking of you; and if I cannot help you, I know it will be soothing to be remembered by your ever, &c."

To the necessity of at once rendering available not only the assets of the concern but likewise the private property of the partners, Mr. Roscoe cheerfully yielded; and he resolved to offer to public sale, without delay, the whole of his personal effects, including his library, pictures, and other works of art, which he had employed himself in collecting, for nearly half a century. The loss of other portions of his property occasioned him, personally, little regret, but he could not avoid regarding with some grief the prospect of parting with those literary treasures which had contributed so largely both to his happiness and his fame. It was under the influence of

these feelings that the following sonnet was written : —

"As one who destined from his friends to part
Regrets his loss, yet hopes again erewhile
To share their converse and enjoy their smile,
And tempers, as he may, affliction's dart,—
Thus, loved associates! chiefs of elder art!
Teachers of wisdom! who could once beguile
My tedious hours and lighten every toil,
I now resign you; nor with fainting heart—
For pass a few short years, or days, or hours,
And happier seasons may their dawn unfold,
And all your sacred fellowship restore;
When freed from earth, unlimited its powers,
Mind shall with mind direct communion hold;
And kindred spirits meet to part no more."

This sonnet, which, unknown to Mr. Roscoe, found its way into the public prints, gave occasion to the following, which appeared soon afterwards in one of the Liverpool newspapers under the signature of *Straniera* : —

"Thou dost not mourn the loss thy friends deplore,
For thou from every letter'd page hast ta'en
That better part of learning's sacred store
Which lifts the soul above all earthly pain,
And bids it view, resign'd, each woful scene
This universal theatre displays;
And thine has learn'd to breathe with brow serene
A calm farewell to friends of other days,
Proving the rich deposits they had left.
Oh, this has added to thy former name,
Which, like thine own Lorenzo's, shall descend
To unborn ages; ne'er shalt thou be reft
Of that bright ray shed from the torch of fame
On learning's patron, and the artist's friend."

A few other poetical offerings of the same kind appeared, from which the following beautiful sonnet is selected: —

"Thou art not friendless now — thou on whose head
The day-star of delight so long hath shone,
Friend of the friendless! though his beams be gone,
And o'er thy path dark clouds may lower instead.
Arm thy strong soul anew! with firmness tread
Thy destined road, and let thy manly breast
In the calm confidence of honour rest,
Rich in the only wealth it coveted.
Live on in hope! Seek thy pure treasure there —
There, where the good man garners up his trust;
And, if the record of his deeds be fair,
Esteems all else but vanity and dust;
Content to know, whate'er the fate he share,
That God appoints it still, and God is just.

"E. T."

The labour of preparing for the press the catalogues of his collections was very considerable, and was almost entirely performed by Mr. Roscoe's own hand, while under the pressure of innumerable other engagements. He felt anxious that the care he had formerly bestowed upon them should not be wholly thrown away, and that they should bear a higher character than the generality of mere sale catalogues. Even in form and appearance he wished them to be such as might be placed with credit on the shelves of a library. "I now," he says, in a letter to his printer, Mr. M'Creery, "send you the beginning of my catalogue; which I was in hopes of making more legible, but have not had time, and

am apprehensive of being too late. I wish you to set up a sheet for me much in the same manner as you printed a short catalogue of the Strawberry Hill books — that is, the title of the book in a good sizeable type, and the annotations, &c. smaller. As it will contain many curious books, I do not mean it to be a common sale catalogue, but to make it a neat small octavo.

"'One would not, sure, be ugly when one 's dead.'"

The library, which had been chiefly collected in the earlier part of Mr. Roscoe's life with a view to his historical studies, though not extensive when compared with many private collections in this country, was particularly rich and copious in some of its departments. The classes of Italian poetry, Italian history, and modern Latin poetry, presented some very rare and valuable works. Amongst the Italian poets, some of the early editions of the works of the Pulci, and of Lorenzo de' Medici, which Mr. Roscoe had obtained at a trifling expense, brought very considerable sums of money. A copy of the *Rappresentazione Sacri*, which had cost him a few shillings, sold for thirty guineas. The selection of classical authors also was valuable, and contained a considerable number of *editiones principes*. But the most curious part of the collection was the series of early printed books illustrating the rise and progress of the art of

printing. Amongst these were many highly valuable and beautiful works, two of the *block books* executed before the invention of moveable types, the *Historia S. Johannis* and the *Biblia Pauperum*, the *Codex Psalmorum*, or Psalter of 1459, printed by Fust and Schoeffer, the second book printed with a date, and of which only eight copies are known to exist; a beautiful copy of the *Catholicon* printed by John Guttemberg at Mentz in 1460; the works of *Lactantius*, from the press of Sweynheyn and Pannartz, the first book printed in Italy, and of such rarity, that, when the celebrated bibliographer De Bure wrote, there was only one copy known in France; the *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* of Durandus by Fust and Gernzheym, the third printed book known with a date; besides a variety of other books from the presses of Italy, Germany, and England, previous to the year 1500. At the conclusion of the catalogue a list is given of the printers of the fifteenth century, whose productions appear in the collection, with the years in which they began to print, and also a list of the editions of works in the library omitted by Panzer in his *Annales Typographici*, — a proof of their great rarity. To this list Mr. Roscoe has added the following note: —

"The 'Annales Typographici' of Panzer consist of two parts: the first, in five volumes,

extending from the origin of the art of printing to the year 1500 inclusive: the second, in six volumes, from the year 1500 to the year 1536 inclusive; and are intended to comprehend a descriptive account of every edition published within those periods. When it is considered that this great work is the production of a single individual, it will be thought much more surprising that, on its first publication, it should be found so nearly complete as it now appears, than that some editions, comparatively very few in number, should be omitted. It is not, therefore, with a view of censuring its defects, but as a homage to its merits, that the following brief list is given; which it is hoped may set an example to those who have to examine and arrange more extensive collections, and contribute, on some future occasion, to render still more perfect the great work already so far advanced."

In addition to the printed books the library also contained a small collection of manuscripts, the principal of which were two copies of the Sacred Writings executed in the early part of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The first of these was highly decorated with historical designs by some artists of the school of Grotto, and had been presented to one of the supreme pontiffs. It is described in the catalogue as "certainly one of the finest and most highly ornamented manuscripts of the Sacred Writings

which has been handed down to the present times."

The sale was attended by all the principal collectors of books in the country, either in person or by their agents, and the prices obtained were such as fully to satisfy Mr. Roscoe's expectations. Lord Spencer, Mr. Heber, and other distinguished bibliographers, were frequent purchasers; and at the recommendation of Mr. Roscoe, a considerable number of books were bought on behalf of Mr. Coke, as necessary additions to the valuable library at Holkham. Amongst others the splendid manuscript of the Bible was purchased for the sum of 200 guineas, and deposited at Holkham, where it forms a distinguished ornament even of that inestimable collection of manuscripts.

At this sale the library of Mr. Roscoe was offered entire to the public, with the exception of a number of presentation copies of different works, which, after a valuation had been put upon them, Mr. Roscoe retained, judging it ungrateful and improper to dispose of these gifts, while it was in his power to prevent the sale of them. These, of course, formed a small and very miscellaneous collection, of little use to him, unless to remind him of those pleasant literary associations of which they were the token. Any other reservations he resolutely refused to make, and gave strict directions that

not a single volume should be bought in for his use.

"The books in the catalogue," he says, in a letter to Mr. M'Creery, "(with some that are omitted by mistake, which will form nearly an additional day's sale,) comprise my entire library, *without reserve*, as may be seen by the books mentioned in the catalogue. All that I keep out are such books as have been *given me* by my friends, and these I shall *not* part with until my grasp is relaxed by *death* or *the law*. The PRESS shall still continue to remind me of long tried friendship, and of the happy hours I have passed with its author."

But while he was thus himself steadily resolved to part with those "loved associates," those "teachers of wisdom," over whose pages he had spent some of the happiest hours of his life, a few of his friends who loved and admired him, and who were unwilling to see him deprived of the literary treasures he so well knew how to employ, consulted together on the best means of preserving them to him. Application was made by them to a small number of other gentlemen, and a sum of money was with ease raised, sufficient, as it was supposed, to purchase all the useful part of the library. This fund was placed under the direction of the Rev. William Shepherd, whose long friendship and literary intercourse with Mr. Roscoe well

qualified him to select the works which would be most likely to prove useful and acceptable to him. This task he performed with the judgment which might have been expected from him, the selection being confined chiefly to works relating to the literary history of Italy, and the biography of the Medici.

Until after the sale Mr. Roscoe was not made acquainted with the intention of his friends; which, with the particulars of the purchases, was then communicated to him by Mr. Shepherd in the following letter: —

" My dear Sir,

" In the general sympathy excited by the untoward events which darkened your prospects at the commencement of this year, the idea of the dispersion of your library was a subject of painful contemplation to many of your friends. By some of these, plans were suggested to me for the retaining of it in your possession, the discussion of which, I well knew, you would not, were you apprised of them, allow to be for a moment entertained. An arrangement was, however, proposed which met with my concurrence, and in the promoting of which, though well knowing the various responsibility which I took upon myself, I have ventured to act. At the earnest solicitation of a select few of your most intimate acquaintances, I marked in your

catalogue such books as I knew would be of most essential importance in the correction of your standard works, which have so justly obtained for their author so large a meed of applause. Of the volumes thus marked, the greater number have, by the kind assistance of Mr. J. B. Yates, been purchased for the individuals in question, who, by my medium, most repectfully request that you will make use of them in the prosecution of your favourite studies, till, under better auspices, you may be enabled to re-acquire or to replace them."

To this letter Mr. Roscoe made the following reply: —

"My dear Sir,

"I know not how to express to you the various sensations to which your letter and its inclosures have given rise in my mind. From the moment that it became necessary to dispose of my library, I resolved, as I believe I informed you, not to repurchase any part of it on my own account; and accordingly not a single book was to my knowledge bought for me: those bid for in the name of Mr. Coke being for his library at Holkham, although, by his permission, I retain for the present such of them as appear to be necessary in the arrangement of his valuable manuscripts.

"Judge, then, of my surprise on finding what

had been done, and of the difficulties I feel in availing myself of the liberality of my friends in the manner I am sure they would wish. Be assured, my dear Sir, no one can be more deeply sensible than myself of the motives which gave rise to this measure, and of the delicacy with which it has been conducted; and if I cannot exactly conform to the terms proposed, I trust I shall be allowed to receive the kindness intended me in a manner less troublesome to my friends, and more satisfactory to myself. I am aware that when my library was first advertised, apprehensions were entertained that our proposed arrangements might not be accomplished; and that this measure was intended to prevent my being entirely deprived of those literary treasures which had constituted so great a portion of my happiness. Had such an event unfortunately occurred, I should most gratefully have accepted their friendly assistance; but the aspect of our affairs is now more favourable, the sale of my property has been made under my own directions, and if those distinguished and ever respected friends, to whose timely and considerate assistance I owe the most heartfelt obligations, will permit me to avail myself of the alternative mentioned in your letter, and repurchase the works bought for my use, it will relieve me from my present anxiety, and infinitely add to the obligations I already feel. In this point of view

I shall think myself fortunate that such a measure has been resorted to; the books purchased (as might be expected from their being chosen by the long and confidential associate of my studies) being selected with the greatest judgment, and such as I should, for the most part, certainly have retained, had I not thought it necessary to the character of the sale that the entire library should be offered to the public. May I beg you, my dear friend, to communicate this my request to your constituents, and at the same time to assure them, not only of my warmest gratitude, but of the satisfaction I must ever feel in the reflection, that, on such an occasion, I have been honoured by so distinguished a proof of the approbation of those, who, by their former kindness and friendship, had entitled themselves to my highest esteem, affection, and respect.

"I am always, my dear Sir,

"Most faithfully yours,

"W. Roscoe."

To the request thus pressingly urged upon them Mr. Roscoe's friends yielded, and the contributions which they had so generously made for his service were returned to them. But the remnant of his library, which seemed to be again within his power, he was unable to retain; and his friend Mr. William Rath-

bone, assisted by a very few other individuals, having become the purchaser of the books, liberally presented them to the library of the Athenæum at Liverpool, where they are preserved as a separate collection.*

* Extract from the Books of Proceedings of the Athenæum:—

"The following letter being read to the Committee by the President:—

"'Liverpool, 29th August, 1817.

"'Dear Sir,

"'I am requested by a few friends of Mr. Roscoe to present to the Athenæum the books of which I enclose a catalogue; reserving to him, during his lifetime, their use, and removal from the library, whenever he may have occasion for them.

"'Mr. Roscoe's friends are desirous thus to record their high respect for his talents, and their gratitude for the virtuous and indefatigable application of them to the advancement of the intellectual character of the town of Liverpool.

"'May I trouble you to communicate the substance of this letter, and its confirmation, to Mr. Roscoe.

"'Believe me, dear Sir,

"'With very sincere respect,

"'Your obliged and faithful'

"'WILLIAM RATHBONE.

"'To the Rev. Jonathan Brooks,

"'President of the Athenæum.'

"Resolved,

"That it be recorded in the Minutes of this Institution, and that the President be requested to express to Mr. Rathbone, the high and grateful sense which the Committee entertain of the splendid present which accompanied it; at the same time expressing their warmest concurrence in the sentiments

The sale of the prints took place immediately after that of the library, and occupied eleven

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of respect and obligation to Mr. Roscoe's literary talents, and the credit they have reflected on the town of Liverpool.

"That Mr. Rathbone be requested to communicate to the Committee the names of the individuals who have presented this munificent donation; and that a bookcase be prepared, in which they may be separately arranged, and on which the mode of receiving them may be recorded.

"That Mr. Roscoe be informed of the amount and conditions under which this donation has been made.

"At a monthly meeting of the Committee, held October 13. 1817, Rev. Jonathan Brooks in the chair, the following letter received from Mr. Roscoe was laid before the Committee, and ordered to be entered in their Minutes:—

"'Dear Sir,

"'I have to request you will receive my sincere acknowledgments, and communicate the same to the Committee of the Athenæum, for the honour they have done me in the arrangements made respecting the books which some of my friends have had the liberality to present to the library of that institution, and for the obliging terms in which such information has been communicated to me.

"'In being enabled to avail myself of the use of these books in common with the other proprietors, I shall feel myself as fully accommodated as if they were under my own roof, whilst at the same time they will, I trust, be of more general benefit than while they were in the possession of an individual.

"'In addition, however, to the favour already conferred on me, I must request the Committee will allow me to add to the collection a few books, of which a minute is enclosed, and which I am desirous should be preserved in the Athenæum, no less as an honour to myself than as a memorial of

days. The collection, which was sold in 1352 lots, and which produced 1915*l.* 1*s.*, was thus described by Mr. Roscoe himself:—

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my regard for that Institution, and of my respect and esteem for its members.

"'I have the honour to be,

"'Dear Sir,

"'Your very faithful and obliged servant,

"'W. Roscoe.

"'Liverpool, 6th Sept. 1817.

"'To the Rev. Jonathan Brooks,

"'President of the Athenæum.'

"BOOKS ALLUDED TO IN THE ABOVE LETTER:—

"Poesie del Magnifico Lorenzo de' Medici tratte da Testi a penna della Libreria.

"Mediceo-Laurentiana. 4to. Liverpool. 1795.

"Canzoni Toscane, da J. T. Mathias. 4to. Lond. 1805.

"The Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, by W. Roscoe. 8vo. 4 vols. Basil. 1799.

"Wilhelm Roscoe's Lorenz von Medici, aus den Englischen von Kurtz Sprengel. 8vo. Berlin. 1797.

"Vie de Laurent de Medicis, traduite de l'Anglais de William Roscoe, par François Thurot. 8vo. 2 tom. Paris, l'an viii.

"Occasional Tracts on the War. 8vo. London. 1810.

"The Life and Pontificate of Leo the Tenth. 4 vols. 4to. Liverpool. 1805. On French paper, of which only six copies were printed.

"Resolved,

"That a letter be returned to Mr. Roscoe by the President, communicating the thanks of the Committee for his very valuable present."

"The prints and etchings comprise,—

"A series of prints from the works of the Greek and Italian painters, illustrative of the progress of painting in Italy, from the earliest to the later ages.

"A series of prints, illustrative of the progress of engraving in Italy, Germany, and Flanders: including choice specimens of every artist of eminence, from the earliest period to Agostino Caracci, in the Italian school; and from Francis Stoss to Edelinck, in the German and Flemish.

"A highly valuable collection of etchings, by the Italian painters, consisting of the works of the most eminent masters, who have etched their own designs, from Parmigiano to Carlo Maratti. Of the Flemish and Dutch painters in various walks of history, landscape, cattle, drolls, and interiors; and of the French school, including fine examples of Claude, Callot, Gaspar Poussin, Sebastian Bourdon, &c.

"An assemblage of fine prints, after Rubens, by the most celebrated engravers of his time. Choice impressions of the Vandyke heads. Several fine works of Rembrandt and his school. Rare specimens of wood and chiaro-scuro prints, by the Italian and German masters. Engravings from antique busts and statues,—a few select books of prints," &c.

Perhaps the most curious and, indeed, the most highly prized portion of these collections was the series of original drawings and pictures, in the procuring of which Mr. Roscoe had taken the greatest delight. He has, himself, explained, in the advertisement to the catalogue, the nature and value of this part of his collection.

"The following works, as well as those comprised in the two former catalogues, have been collected during a series of years, chiefly for the purpose of illustrating, by a reference to original and authentic sources, the rise and progress of the arts in modern times, as well in Germany and Flanders as in Italy. They are, therefore, not wholly to be judged of by their positive merits, but by a reference to the age in which they were produced. Their value chiefly depends upon their authenticity, and the light they throw on the history of the arts; yet, as they extend beyond the splendid era of 1500, there will be found several productions of a higher class, which may be ranked amongst the *chefs-d'œuvre* of modern skill.

"With regard to the originality of the drawings, which form the first part of the following catalogue, it may be proper to observe, that as such productions were for the most part intended only for the use of the artist in his more finished compositions, and not like etchings or engravings for publication, he has seldom authenticated

them either by his name or mark. This deficiency has, therefore, been supplied in general, either by the friends and contemporaries of the artist, or by the persons into whose hands they have in subsequent times happened to fall, and who have endeavoured to assign each piece to its proper master; at the same time, frequently adding some note or mark, distinguishing the drawing as having formed a part of some particular collection. The authenticity of such drawings may, therefore, be considered as sanctioned by the different persons to whom they have successively belonged, and whose autographs or marks they bear; amongst whom may be enumerated the celebrated painters, Georgio Vasari, and Benedetto Luti, together with the Duke of Modena, Padre Resta, and many others in Italy; M. Crozat, M. Marriette, and others in France; many collectors in Holland and the Low Countries, and King Charles I., the Earl of Arundel, Sir Peter Lely, Martin Folkes, Esq., Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Barnard, and several others in this kingdom; and particularly that very worthy man and excellent connoisseur, Jonathan Richardson, who formed the finest collection of drawings ever brought together in this country. Thus, these works have been received as authentic, and have passed from one cabinet to another from the rise of art to the present day; and in

this state, a great part of the following collection is now brought before the public.

"Hopes had been indulged by the present possessor, that the works of literature and art included in this and the two preceding catalogues, might have formed the basis of a more extensive collection, and have been rendered subservient to some object of public utility; but the circumstances of the times are not favourable to his views, and they are now, therefore, offered to the public in detail, and without reserve. The catalogues may serve, however, to give an idea of the entire collection when the works that compose it are again dispersed."

The drawings, consisting of 610 lots, and the paintings of 156, produced at the sale the sum of *2825l. 19s.*

The most remarkable and valuable picture in the collection was a portrait of Leo X., with his cousin, the Cardinal Giulio de' Medici and his nephew, the Cardinal de' Rossi. Of the history of this painting Mr. Roscoe has given the following account: —

"Vasari relates, that when Federigo, Duke of Mantua, passed through Florence, to pay his respects to Clement VII., he saw in the palace of the Medici the portrait of Leo X., with the Cardinals Giulio de' Medici and Rossi, with which he was so highly pleased, that on his arrival at Rome, he requested it as a gift from the

Pope, who was then at the head of the Medici family, and one of the persons represented in the picture. The Pontiff generously complied with his wishes, and directions were accordingly sent to Ottaviano de' Medici, at Florence, to forward the picture to Mantua; but he, being unwilling that the family should be deprived of such a treasure, sent to Andrea del Sarto, and requested him to copy it, which he did with such success, that Ottaviano himself could not distinguish the copy from the original; concealing, therefore, the picture of Raffaelle, he sent to Mantua that of Andrea del Sarto, with which the Duke was perfectly satisfied, and even Giulio Romano, the favourite pupil of Raffaelle, who was then resident at Mantua, was not aware of the deception.

"In this error they might have remained, had not a singular incident led to an explanation. Vasari, then a young and rising artist, desirous of forming an acquaintance with Giulio Romano, paid a visit to Mantua, where he was received with great civility by Giulio, who, after gratifying him with a sight of the works of art which the city afforded, at length exhibited to him the picture of Raffaelle, as the greatest ornament of the place. 'A beautiful work!' cried Vasari, 'but not by the hand of Raffaelle.'—'How so?' said Giulio. 'Is it possible I should not recognise the touches of my own pencil upon it?'

— 'You are mistaken,' replied Vasari: 'this picture is the work of Andrea del Sarto' (under whom Vasari had studied at the time the copy was made); 'and as a proof of it, there is a mark on it which I will show you. The picture was accordingly taken down, and the mark mentioned by Vasari discovered; upon which Giulio declared, 'that he valued the copy no less than the picture of Raffaelle himself; nay,' added he, 'even more, because it is incredible that one painter should so perfectly imitate the manner of another.'

"In consequence of this artifice the picture of Raffaelle remained at Florence, till it was carried away a few years since to ornament the immense collection of the Louvre; that of Andrea del Sarto afterwards came into the possession of the Duke of Parma, from which city it was transferred to Naples, and formed a part of the royal collection at Capo di Monte, where it remained till that collection was dispersed by the revolutionary troubles, and is presumed to have found its way, in common with many other pictures from the same collection, into this country, where it became the property of a respectable dealer in London, who never would part with it in his lifetime, but after whose death it was purchased by its present possessor.

"During the time these pictures were in Italy, they were the frequent subject of com-

parison and criticism. Richardson, in his account of the works of art in Italy, (vol. iii. p. 665.) says, there are who pretend that the copy is preferable to the original, but to judge properly it would be requisite to see them together. He prefers the original, but at the same time he doubts whether he may not be prejudiced in favour of Raffaelle. The prelate Bottari, the learned editor and annotator of Vasari's Lives of the Painters, relates, that by particular favour he obtained a sight of the picture at Naples, (about the year 1756,) and returned twice to examine it, but could not obtain permission to take it out of the frame. 'I can however say,' adds he, 'that this is one of the most stupendous pictures I have ever seen, and appears not to have been painted more than six months. I have fresh in my memory the original of Raffaelle, which I saw not many years since, and I aver that, setting aside the names of the painters, and the knowledge of the facts, many good judges would take the copy in preference to the original, which is now turned rather black; whilst the copy, besides its freshness, is more soft and fleshy than the original.' In his notes on the Lettere Pittoriche (of which he was also the editor), Bottari repeats his observations on these two pictures; 'L' originale di questo quadro (di Raffaelle) è nel Palazzo de' Pitti; e la copia d' Andrea è presso S. M. Rè di Na-

poli; e sto per dire che ora è più bella dell' originale.' (vol. ii. p. 400.)

"From the accounts of those who have seen the picture of Raffaelle, in the Louvre, its condition has not been improved since its arrival in France; and M. Landon, who has given an outline of it in the Annales du Musée, admits, 'qu'elle a pâti,' whilst the present picture still retains the freshness ascribed to it by Bottari, and appears not to have been painted more than six months.

"What was the mark by which Andrea distinguished his copy from the original, Vasari has not mentioned; but the prelate Bottari informs us, that he had heard Gabbiani, who was himself an eminent painter, and who was born soon after the middle of the seventeenth century, and had associated with many old professors, say, 'that the mark set upon the picture by Andrea, was the writing his name on the edge or thickness of the pannel, which was covered by the frame; and that when Vasari had the picture taken out of the frame, Giulio read the inscription.'

"Notwithstanding these facts, the picture had been a considerable time in the possession of its present owner, before he examined whether any traces of such an inscription could be discovered. Having, however, been assured several times, as well by artists as others who had seen it at

Capo di Monte, that this was the identical picture, and several peculiarities being pointed out, which appeared too striking to be mistaken, he had, about two years since, the picture taken out of the frame, in the presence of some of his friends, when, on the left edge of the pannel, which is about three quarters of an inch thick, the remains of the inscription were still visible. This inscription was much obliterated, but, according to the best judgment that could be formed of it, had been composed of the letters

ANDREA. F. P. . . . . .

probably followed by the date of the year, which was, however, quite illegible.

"The coincidence of this fact with the relation of Vasari and the tradition of Gabbiani, was considered by the parties present as a sufficient evidence of this being the identical picture of Andrea del Sarto.

"It may be proper to add, that from the enquiries that have been made, it does not appear that the picture of Andrea is now either at Naples or Palermo, to which latter place a great part of the collection at Capo di Monte had been removed before the French obtained possession of Naples."

Another picture to which Mr. Roscoe attached a very high value, was that of the Madonna and Child, by Ghirlandajo, with a frieze by Michel-

agnolo, mentioned in a letter to Sir J. E. Smith, given in a preceding page. But perhaps the most striking picture in the collection was a Head of Christ, by Lionardo da Vinci, a composition of the noblest conception, and full of the deepest feeling. These three pictures, certainly the flowers of the collection, were purchased by Mr. Coke, and now adorn the walls of Holkham.

Many of the best productions of Fuseli's pencil were found in the collection. Some of these had been painted at Mr. Roscoe's request, and amongst others, a large painting representing the Death of Lorenzo de' Medici. On commencing this picture, Fuseli addressed the following letter to Mr. Roscoe:—

"You will perceive by this short quotation, that I have been looking into your tenth chapter, which contains the event of the subject you propose to me for the chimney-piece of your dining-room, and which I think a very good one. The figures, half lengths, on a canvass of 6 feet by 4½ or 5. A Guercino size, I suppose. Not an upright posture. Lorenzo, Politiano, Pico. The most striking, and, for a painter, the most expressive moment of this scene appears to me that, when Lorenzo, grasping the hands of his friend, steadfastly regards him: whilst Politiano, to conceal his emotion and tears, turns his face aside. But at that moment Pico was not yet arrived; a circumstance, how-

ever, which, I think, need not be regarded; as his presence, both for expression and composition appears, if not indispensably necessary, highly important. And thinking that you will agree with me in this, I wish to know if you are possessed of good and authentic heads of either, at least of Pico; as the profile of Politiano, in your book, may perhaps answer. The whole, with its chiaro-scuro, is arranged in my head, and I shall, in a little time, set about it; but I would rather decline sending you a sketch, as they always raise expectations which no picture can answer; the firstlings of my hand shall be on the canvass, as in the Cardinal which Shepherd has; to whom I beg you will remember me."

In consequence of this letter, some prints and medals of Lorenzo and his contemporaries were sent to Fuseli, whose observations upon them are contained in the following letter:—

"I take the opportunity of Mr. Johnson's return to Liverpool, to inform you that I am not only alive, but alive for you,—whether it be life to any purpose for myself or you, which in this case is nearly the same thing, you will be able to tell, I hope, before the middle of next month. The conception of the moment remains unaltered, the same I had at first.

"'Piobbe,' says Dante, 'nell' alta phantasia;' —'Alluxit nobis,' says Vitellius. The business

which remains now, is to make the execution correspond; and, what of all others is the most difficult thing in art, to give the last deciding touches with felicity. It has been matter of some perplexity to me that nothing very characteristic of persons and costume occurs in the 'History of Lorenzo:' that he was destitute of smell is, indeed, a personal peculiarity, but of less service to me than La Fleur's knack at making spatterdashes was to Sterne. The medals and print your son (to whom commend me) left with me are, with regard to *Lorenzo*, abominable caricatures, do not suffice to *Pico*, and turn *Politian* into a fat schoolmaster. It will therefore be some merit to have done better, and yet to have preserved some likeness. After all, I suspect, between you and me, your hero to have been a d—d ill-looking fellow. The head of Attila, as we find it on medals, has elevation and beauty compared with the human reptile you sent to me. *Pico*, on the medal, has an air of age beyond what he attained, and looks not very unlike Mr. Whitbread."

The picture, when completed, formed the chief ornament of the dining-room at Allerton, the walls of which were decorated entirely with paintings from the same hand. On the sale of the collection it was purchased in a name unknown to Mr. Roscoe, and, by the desire of the purchaser, presented to him, through the

auctioneer, Mr. Winstanley. To the letter announcing this gift Mr. Roscoe sent the following reply: —

"Dear Sir,

"May I beg you to express to the liberal but unknown donor of the picture of the death of Lorenzo de' Medici by Fuseli, my most grateful acknowledgments for his very acceptable present; which will now be more valuable to me than ever, as, independently of the estimation in which I hold it on account of the subject and the painter, it will call to mind an act of generosity, which, although I am not permitted to acknowledge it to the giver, will always afford me the sincerest pleasure as having been the object of such an instance of disinterested kindness.

"Please to communicate the contents of this to the proper quarter, and to believe me," &c.

By Mr. Roscoe's directions this picture was presented, after his death, to the Athenæum at Liverpool, and is now placed in an excellent situation in the library of that institution.

A considerable number of the pictures, more especially those of the early masters, which, though highly curious as illustrating the history of art, were little interesting to the ordinary collector, did not meet with purchasers at the sale.

Those which afforded a series of specimens both of the Italian and German schools, were afterwards bought by the directions of the same gentlemen who had so liberally presented the collection of books from Mr. Roscoe's library to the Athenæum, and were by them given to the Liverpool Royal Institution, the walls of which they now adorn, and form one of the interesting objects which attract strangers to that establishment.

Amid the heavy anxieties in which the settlement of his affairs involved him, Mr. Roscoe's mind was occasionally diverted, and soothed by communications which recalled the memory of those happier days devoted to the study of literature and of art. Acknowledgments of the pleasure and advantage derived from the perusal of his works, testimonies from unexpected quarters to their merits, and expressions of gratitude for services rendered, could not fail to be gratifying to his feelings.

From Mr. Singer he received, in the spring of this year, his beautiful and ingenious volume on the History of Playing Cards, which was dedicated to him in very flattering terms. This work was accompanied by the following letter:—

"I have much pleasure in offering to your acceptance the accompanying literary trifle. May I hope you will not deem it an intrusion,

that I have ventured to inscribe it with your name.

"The truth is that I have long sought an opportunity of showing some mark of the high sense I entertain of your worth, your talents, and your successful exertions as a true patriot and as a man of letters. I have only to regret that mine is not a more worthy tribute; for I owe to the influence of your writings upon my mind at an early age the chief of my literary pleasures. It was the 'Life of Lorenzo de' Medici' that first inspired me with a desire to hear the swans of Arno in their harmonious native strains.

"Grateful for this, and full of admiration of your public conduct, no one can more sincerely wish that the evening of your bright day which has been passed so honourably to yourself, and so usefully to your country, may be attended with that tranquillity which is the best reward of such a course. With sentiments of the highest esteem, and best wishes for your health and happiness, believe me," &c.

It was the good fortune of Mr. Roscoe to be amongst the first of those who observed and encouraged the genius of Gibson, whose works as a sculptor have since gained him such deserved celebrity. While yet studying the rudiments of his art he became known to Mr. Roscoe, who, quickly detecting his talents, encouraged him by

his advice and assistance to proceed with his studies. His visits to Allerton were frequent and welcome; and he had there free access to the various collections of works of art which Mr. Roscoe was delighted to look over in company with him. At the end of the year 1815 a scheme had been arranged for his visiting Rome, in the promotion of which Mr. Roscoe had promised to bear a part, which circumstances unfortunately prevented him from doing. That Gibson was not insensible to the kindness thus shown him will appear from the following letter written shortly before his going abroad: —

"Since my arrival in London I have often been on the point of writing to you, but my consciousness of the nature of your late engagements rendered me diffident of addressing you.

"Now, as I imagine the bustle of things has subsided with you, I venture to tell you that Mr. Fuseli received me as you could wish, and will give me a letter to Canova, and to others at Rome, and that I have been introduced by Mr. Christie to Mr. G. W. Taylor, who has employed me since my arrival in London. He is kind, liberal, and rich, and is, I think, determined to be of use to art in all its departments. He has expressed himself particularly delighted with what I have done for him — three busts of his children in marble. At present I am with him and his family here, at Earl Spencer's villa,

modelling his lady and himself. When these are finished I go on to Rome.

" It is with the consciousness of the pleasure this will give you I thus write about myself. This consciousness is more fixed and heightened within me when I count the years you have honoured me with your attention and kindness.

" Whenever my imagination glides to *Allerton*, it is with a deep feeling of gratitude and respect; for it was there my inexperienced youth was led to the path of *simple art;* it was there it caught the flame of ambition; it was there the suggestion of Rome was given birth to: therefore, dear Sir, though fate has prevented you from indulging your generous intentions towards me on this occasion of going abroad, it has not lessened my gratitude, but has made me feel and value, with more warmth, the superior part of our nature, that divine generosity which, when deprived of those partial gifts of fortune, exists the same in the noble mind, and therefore ought to possess a superior, an exalted place in the estimation of true gratitude. Through life, dear Sir, gratefully and respectfully yours, J. G."

" I was highly gratified," Mr. Roscoe writes in reply, " by your obliging letter, as well from your kind remembrance of me as from the favourable account you give me of your own pro-

ceedings and prospects. As to what you are so good as to say respecting the advantages you suppose you have derived from my acquaintance, I cannot but be sensible with what caution I ought to receive it; but I will not deny that it affords me sincere pleasure, from the consciousness that it has ever been my wish to contribute, as far as in my power, to bring forward those talents, which, if patiently and duly cultivated, will confer lasting honour on your name.

"I rejoice to find you have now met with a friend who knows how to appreciate your merits. This morning I had the honour of a letter from Mr. Taylor, requesting that you would take a model of me for a bust in marble, to be executed by you at Rome,—a request which, under such circumstances, it is impossible for me to refuse. As I cannot, however, leave home at present, I should be glad of a line informing me when and where you can enter upon this undertaking; and remain with the sincerest esteem and best wishes, &c. &c. W. R."

The favourable accounts from Rome, which from time to time Mr. Roscoe received of the growing celebrity of Gibson, afforded him the sincerest gratification, and it was seldom that the letters of the latter did not allude, with expressions of pleasure and gratitude very honourable to the writer, to the encouragement that had been extended to the studies of his

youth. "I shall see more," he says, in a letter from Rome, dated May, 1818, "I shall do more, and I shall write more, said I to myself; and thus time flies away without my addressing my earliest friend. Now I have not forgotten the pathways that lead to Allerton. I have not forgotten your early attentions to me, and which brought me to the notice of those friends whose generosity has opened the gates of Rome to me. Yes, here I am, and could be contented for ever in Rome, for I like it more and more. I have not yet seen the third part of what this city contains, for I began to work soon after my arrival here, anxious to show Canova something I have been designing and modelling. At present I have in hand the model of a shepherd-boy, sleeping (my own design), which I have been studying from nature. The Marquis was so good as to come to my studio to see it, and he seems much pleased with it. He says that I have made the body and the head beautiful.

"The Marquis is quite intimate with Roscoe. How I have wished I had a copy of the Address which you delivered at the opening of the Institution to show Canova. He said that I should make the hair of your bust* like that of Eu-

* In the year 1827 Gibson presented a bust of Mr. Roscoe, in marble, to the Liverpool Royal Institution, accompanying it with the following letter:—

ripides. I shall model it all anew, as I do not work by the piece. I have done Mrs. Taylor's all anew, and am cutting it in marble."

It was the happy fortune of Mr. Roscoe to number amongst his friends many of the best men of his day. Of these there was no one for whom he entertained higher sentiments of esteem and respect than the late Mr. Reynolds, of Bristol. Those sentiments will be found expressed in the following letter to Mr. William Rathbone, the grandson of Mr. Reynolds, written on the occasion of the death of the latter.

" I am so fully sensible of what your mother

" Sir, " Rome, 5th March, 1827.

" Permit me to offer, through you, to the Committee of the Royal Liverpool Institution (as a grateful tribute to my first patrons — to those who enabled me to study my profession where I could best learn it), the accompanying bust, in marble, of their illustrious and venerable president, Roscoe.

" To that gentleman I am indebted for what little merit I may possess as a sculptor. He first inspired me with ideas worthy of my profession, and kindled within me an ardent love of fame in the pursuit of it.

" By this monument, if I have endeavoured to perpetuate the lineaments of an excellent man, I have hoped also to perpetuate the gratitude and respect of the artist whom he protected.

" I have the honour to remain, Sir,

" Your much obliged humble servant,

" JOHN GIBSON.

" T. Martin, Esq., Secretary,

" Liverpool Royal Institution."

has to go through on the present occasion, that I cannot think of intruding on her, and must therefore beg you to accept for her and yourself, your brother and sister, as well as for Mr. Joseph Reynolds and his family, the assurances of that sincere sorrow and affectionate sympathy which we all feel for you on the loss of your most excellent and ever respected relative, a loss to be lamented not only by his family and surviving friends, but wherever his name and character have been known.

"And yet, my dear friend, if ever there was an occasion, on which the tears we shed are tears of affection and tenderness, rather than of grief and distress, it is the present; when a good man, full of years and honour, goes to receive the reward of his labours, leaving to those who are dearest to him the benefit of his example, the credit of his widely respected name, and the delightful hope, that, by following in his track, they will finally be admitted to his society again in a happier state of being."

To Mrs. Rathbone, the daughter of Mr. Reynolds, he thus addressed himself on the same event:—

—— "I have not been able wholly to repress my sentiments on this occasion, nor to resist the earnest desire of paying my tribute of affection and admiration to the character of your excellent and venerated father. How inadequate the en-

closed lines are to express what I feel, none but myself can judge; but I confide them to you as the best offering I have it in my power to make, and with the view (if you and Mr. Reynolds should not disapprove it) of printing a few copies in the form in which it is now sent, to be distributed to such of your father's friends as you may think would be gratified by such a memorial, however humble, of a person universally and deservedly respected and beloved."

The following are the lines adverted to by Mr. Roscoe.

"IN MEMORY

OF

RICHARD REYNOLDS, OF BRISTOL,

Who died at Cheltenham, on the 10th of September, 1816, aged 80 years.

"O let no plaint be heard, no murmurs rise,
When, ripe in years and goodness, REYNOLDS dies!
But 'mid the precincts of this sacred bound
Let calm and holy silence breathe around;
Whilst filial duty, bending o'er his bier,
Consigns to Gratitude the sorrowing tear;
And humble Hope, with feelings unexprest,
Owns the full promise through her thrilling breast.

"For, oh! if breathings of accordant airs,
The orphan's offerings and the mourner's prayers,
Blessings from fervent hearts, in secret paid,
For soothing comforts, and for timely aid;
For prompt compassion, vigilant to save,
For bounty, generous as the heart that gave:

If these, ascending towards the source of light,
May waft the spirit on its heavenward flight,
Thou, REYNOLDS, 'midst the mansions of the just,
Crown'd are thy labours, and confirm'd thy trust;
Then, the last shade of earthly doubt removed,
Thy deeds recorded and thy life approved,
Thou hear'st with joy thy Master's blest decree—
'What thou hast done for these, was done for me.'"

CHAPTER XV.

1817, 1818.

Meeting for the establishment of the Liverpool Royal Institution. — Report drawn up by Mr. Roscoe. — Introductory lecture delivered by him — printed by request of the Committee. — Letters from Mr. Shepherd and from Dr. Aikin, on this occasion. — Resigns the office of President of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool. — His contributions to that society. — Essay on the Application of the Principles of Morality to the Intercourse of States. — Is elected a member of the Philadelphia Linnæan Society. — Correspondence with Sir Joseph Banks on Miss M'Avoy's pretensions to the faculty of discriminating colours by the touch. — Tract on Penal Jurisprudence meditated. — Hymns contributed by Mr. Roscoe to the Collection for the use of Protestant Dissenters. — Anthem — set to music by Mr. Webbe. — Proposal to him to write a History of the State of Europe — declined. — He communicates with M. La Fayette through Mr. M'Creery. — Interview of the latter with M. La Fayette. — Letter from M. La Fayette to Mr. Roscoe — his reply — his regret that he had been unable to carry into effect his more extended views. — Lines expressive of his deep feeling on this subject.

CHAPTER XV.

Amongst the public institutions of Liverpool, there existed, for a long period, none devoted to the purposes of liberal education. The advantages and conveniences of an establishment, where academical instruction of a higher character than is usually bestowed at a private school might be obtained, and where young persons, who had finished the ordinary routine of education, might have an opportunity of cultivating their minds, induced Dr. Traill, of Liverpool, in the year 1813, to draw up a plan for an institution of this nature; and in the following year, a number of gentlemen, favourable to the design, called a public meeting, "to take into consideration the expediency of establishing an Institution for the promotion of literature, science, and the arts." The meeting was numerously attended; and a resolution was carried, that the sum of 30,000*l.* should be raised in shares of 100*l.* each, for the purpose of carrying the project into effect. A committee of twenty gentlemen, amongst whom was Mr. Roscoe, was appointed, who immediately published a detailed plan of

the Institution; the objects of which they proposed to accomplish by academical schools,—by public lectures,—by the encouragement of societies, who might unite for similar objects,—by collections of books, specimens of art, natural history, &c.; by providing a laboratory and philosophical apparatus, and by the association of the proprietors for the communication of literary and philosophical intelligence. At the end of three years from this time, the committee made their first report, which was drawn up by Mr. Roscoe, as chairman of that body. A spacious and convenient building had been obtained; arrangements for the establishment of the schools and lectures had been made; apartments had been provided for the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool, and for the Liverpool Academy of Artists; and a reading-room, furnished with the Foreign and English literary periodical works, had been provided for the use of the proprietors. The objects of the Institution are thus concisely stated at the conclusion of the report:—"If your committee were required to explain, as briefly as possible, the advantages, public and private, which this Institution is calculated to afford, they would beg leave to state, that it is intended to unite the benefits of a strictly academical education with domestic and social habits, and a knowledge of the manners and affairs of public life; to perpetuate the

acquirements of youth beyond the limits of the school, and to diffuse a more general taste for scientific and literary subjects, so as to enable the town of Liverpool to keep pace with, if not to excel, other populous communities, as well abroad as at home, in those discoveries and improvements which have, of late years, been as astonishing as they are useful, and seem still to be proceeding in an increased ratio; and to promote, in the most efficacious manner, those studies and occupations which confer honour on the human character, and add no less to the dignity than to the rational pleasures of life."

It was announced in this report, that the operations of the Institution would commence by public lectures, of which an introductory one would be given by Mr. Roscoe, to be succeeded by courses on different branches of natural history, by Dr. Traill and Dr. Vose. Sir James Edward Smith also undertook to deliver a course of lectures on botany, and Mr. Campbell on poetry.

The delivery of the introductory lecture, announced in the report, took place on the 25th of November. The task of preparing, and still more of pronouncing this lecture, was one of no little weight to Mr. Roscoe. It was with difficulty that, amid the distraction of business, he found time for its composition; and the idea of coming forward to deliver it in public, at a season when

seclusion was so much more grateful to his feelings, disturbed and oppressed him. He yielded, however, to the conviction that he could not be wrong in thus performing a public duty, and that he should be supported on the occasion by the kindness of many friends. Nor was he mistaken. By a very numerous assembly, which filled every part of the large lecture-room of the Institution, he was received with the most flattering applause, which was repeated at the conclusion of the lecture. On the following day, he received from the committee a letter, requesting him to publish the Discourse, with which he thought proper to comply, and it was subsequently printed under the following title, "On the Origin and Vicissitudes of Literature, Science, and Art, and their Influence on the present State of Society; a Discourse, delivered on the opening of the Liverpool Royal Institution, 25th November, 1817."*

The nature of this discourse sufficiently appears from its title. Its great object was to inculcate the too frequently forgotten truth, that it is to their own exertions that individuals must look for their improvement in taste, in literature, and in science; and that here, as in other cases, he who wishes to excel, must be the architect of his

* Liverpool: Printed by Harris and Co.; and sold by Cadell and Davies, London.

own fortunes. "To suppose that the human race is subjected to a certain and invariable law, by which they continue either to degenerate or improve; to presume, that the progress of civilisation, science, and taste, is limited to certain climates and tracts of country; or to adopt the idea, that when they have risen to a certain degree of excellence, they must, in the common course of affairs, necessarily decline, is to deaden all exertion, and to subject the powers of the mind to the operation of inert matter, or to the fluctuations of accident and chance."

In the following animated passage he has philosophically traced the natural union between *utility* and *pleasure*.

"In thus attempting to vindicate the studies of literature and the cultivation of the fine arts chiefly on the principle of utility, I am not insensible that I may be supposed to be indifferent or adverse to the opinions of those who have defended them on other grounds. There are many persons who contend that their object is to please, and who attribute the enjoyment we derive from them to the bounty of the Creator, who, throughout the whole of his works, has shown, that an attention to order, to elegance, and to beauty, corresponding to certain fixed principles in our constitution, forms a part of his great and beneficent plan. But whilst I admit the full force of this argument, I conceive

that, in this instance, there exists no necessity for our separating the ideas of utility and of pleasure, and of relying for our justification on one of them only. The gifts of the Creator are full handed; nor has he always placed it in our power to accept of that which is indispensably necessary, without, at the same time, compelling us to accept of the pleasure that accompanies it. We may morosely suppose, that fine prospects, beautiful flowers, or sweet sounds, are below the dignity, or unworthy the attention of an improved and rational mind; but we cannot close our ears to the morning song of the lark, nor avoid the sight of the landscape, unless we refuse to breathe the breath of heaven, and relinquish the cheerful beam of day; and if we resolve that our palate shall not be gratified, we must deprive ourselves of that nutriment which is necessary to our very existence. Apply this to all the conveniences, and even the elegancies of life, and then let us ask, what is the result of this system of intellectual and physical enjoyment to which the cynical and short-sighted observer has applied the equivocal and injurious term of luxury? That great classes of the industrious part of the community are employed, ingenuity exerted, talents rewarded, wealth circulated through an infinite variety of channels, and a general bond of union arising from an interchange of services and rewards is formed

amongst the vast family of the human race. "A man of benevolence," says Mr. Dugald Stewart, "whose mind is tinctured with philosophy, will view all the different improvements in arts, in commerce, and in the sciences, as co-operating to promote the union, the happiness, and the virtue of mankind." Utility and pleasure are thus bound together in an indissoluble chain; and what the Author of nature "has joined, let no man put asunder."

Upon the objects of the Institution Mr. Roscoe remarks, "It is to the union of the pursuits of literature with the affairs of the world, that we are to look forwards towards the improvement of both; towards the stability and foundation of the one, and the grace and ornament of the other; and this union is most likely to be effected by establishments in the nature of the present Institution, founded in the midst of a great commercial community, and holding out opportunities of instruction, not only for those intended for the higher and more independent ranks of life, but for those who, amidst the duties of an active profession, or the engagements of mercantile concerns, wish to cultivate their intellectual powers and acquirements.

"Nor is it to the period of youth alone that the purposes of this Institution are intended to be confined. Education is the proper employment, not only of our early years, but of our

whole lives; and they who, satisfied with their attainments, neglect to avail themselves of the improvements which are daily taking place in every department of human knowledge, will, in a few years, have the mortification to find themselves surpassed by much younger rivals. In order to afford the best possible opportunity of preventing such a result, it is the avowed object of this Institution, not only to establish a system of academical education, but to draw from every part of the United Kingdom the best instructors that can be obtained, on those subjects which are of the first importance and the highest interest to mankind. By these means an establishment will be formed, original in its plan, and efficient in its operation; affording to the inhabitants of this great town an opportunity of domestic instruction for their children, equal, it is hoped, to any that can elsewhere be obtained; and preventing the necessity of resorting to those distant seminaries, where, amidst the promiscuous society of youthful associates the character is left to be formed as chance and circumstances may direct. Nor will the course of instruction cease with the period of manhood; but will be continued for the use of those who may choose to avail themselves of it in future life; thereby carrying the acquirements of youth into real use; applying them to the practical concerns of the world, and pre-

venting, as far as possible, that absurd and entire relinquishment of the benefits and attainments of education, which generally takes place at the precise time when they should be converted to their most useful and important purposes."

Soon after its publication in England, a translation of the Discourse into Italian appeared.

The applause with which this Discourse was received was not confined to its delivery. From many quarters the most gratifying criticisms upon it were transmitted to its author, none of which afforded him higher pleasure than the following, from his attached friend, the Rev. W. Shepherd: —

"When I received the copy of your inaugural oration on the opening of the Liverpool Royal Institution, which you were so kind as to send me, I was on the wing for my usual holiday excursion, and since my return home I have been so much occupied by the commencement of my school labours, that I had not time to read it till a day or two ago. On its perusal, I am by no means surprised at the universal satisfaction with which it was received at its delivery. The views which it exhibits of the causes of the rise and decline of literature and art, in various countries, are at once profound and clear. Its assertion of the dignity and utility of the pursuits of science and learning

is convincing and persuasive. In style, it is luminous, and, upon just occasion, eloquent and pathetic. By the publication of this work you have laid the world of letters under fresh obligations, and have added a new ornament to the pillar of your literary fame. That you should 'tot curis molestiisque distractus' have been able to produce such a composition, is a subject of surprise to the many, and of congratulation to your friends; in which number to be reckoned has long been the pride and pleasure of yours, most sincerely, W. S."

Dr. Aikin also congratulated him on this occasion, in a letter which was the last that Mr. Roscoe ever received from his friend:—

"Many thanks, my dear friend, for your very kind and welcome letter, and your congratulations on the state of my health. The latter is, indeed, more improved than I could once have imagined, and I have scarcely any thing to complain of except a defect of memory, which I find generally accompanying advanced life, and which does not yet deprive me of those mental occupations which are most suitable to my age.

"It is with great pleasure that I learn from Edmund, that there are no symptoms of any decline in that part of your constitution, and that the admirable powers with which you have so long amused and instructed the world, still exhibit all their pristine vigour.

"The *Institution*, which I must regard as principally indebted to you for its success, and which may one day convert Liverpool into an Athens or a Florence, has been most auspiciously brought forward under your tutelage, and I have the satisfaction of hearing from all who were your auditors, that nothing could have surpassed your exertions on that occasion. In my retirement from the world I conceive that you can scarcely be in earnest, by assigning me *high-learned* and *orthodox* acquaintance; but had I any such, you might be assured of my best endeavours to enlist them in your service. At present my knowledge of such distinguished persons is in the records of my past life, and is likely never to be renewed."

Of the Literary and Philosophical Society, whose meetings were transferred, as above related, to the rooms of the Royal Institution, Mr. Roscoe had been for some years the president. His incessant avocations unfortunately prevented him from attending the meetings of the society with regularity, and from contributing so frequently, as it was his desire to do, to its transactions. The feeling that he was unable properly to fulfil the duties of his office induced him, in the year 1825, to tender his resignation, which he did, in the following letter to his friend, Dr. Traill, the vice president.

"I much regret that it will not be in my

power to attend the meeting of the Literary and Philosophical Society this evening, particularly as it was my wish to have expressed in person to the society, my grateful acknowledgments for the honour they have so long done me in continuing me in the office of their president, notwithstandng the very imperfect manner in which I cannot but feel I have been able to perform the duties of that station. I am sorry to add, that my increasing years, and uncertain state of health, which almost disqualify me from long continued exertion, have at length induced me most respectfully to tender my resignation, which I do with the sincerest sentiments of kindness and regard for every individual of a society from which I have uniformly experienced the utmost liberality and the greatest indulgence, and of which I shall still be happy in taking my place as a member as often as circumstances will admit.

"May I beg, my dear Sir, you will have the goodness to communicate this to the society this evening in such manner as you may think most proper."

At the earnest solicitation, however, of the society, Mr. Roscoe was induced to retain the office of their president, with the understanding that his personal attendance would not be expected.

The contributions of Mr. Roscoe to the

"Transactions of the Literary and Philosophical Society" were few in number, not exceeding three or four. One of the most interesting of these, and, perhaps, one of the very best of his productions was an essay "On the Application of the Principles of Morality to the Intercourse of States." This paper originated in some remarks made by Mr. Bigland in his "Historical Display," upon a passage in the "Life of Leo X.," in which the author applies the same principles of morality which obtain in private life to the intercourse of states.

The following preliminary remarks are highly characteristic of Mr. Roscoe's sentiments on this and other subjects of the greatest interest to mankind.

"Truths hidden to former ages are not only openly asserted, but are diffusing themselves amongst the community with a rapidity which nothing can oppose. Among these may be enumerated the establishment of the great principle of natural and personal rights, with the existence of which a state of slavery is incompatible.—The practical refutation of the absurd and dangerous maxim, that the safety and well-being of a nation depends upon the depression and weakness of surrounding states.—The open assertion of the doctrine that war is not a necessary evil, but may be averted by means, which it is perfectly in the power of rational beings to

adopt.—The necessity of a more enlightened jurisprudence, by which the exercise of the benevolent feelings shall be substituted for those of anger, cruelty, and revenge; and, lastly, the establishment of the opinion that the rules of morality, which are binding upon every individual in private life, are equally applicable to the conduct of governments, and the intercourse of nations with each other: — these propositions, so various in their objects, so important in their results, are all deducible from one source, and united together in a common origin, being all comprised in the great precept of Christianity, '*to do to others as we would they should do to us.*'

"In the publications which I have at different times ventured to lay before the world, I have occasionally adverted to some of the topics above-mentioned, and have endeavoured, as far as my humble efforts can prevail, to establish their truth and demonstrate their practicability. In particular, I had in one of those works expressed an opinion that an individual, when his sphere of action becomes more extended, ought to pursue, on a large scale, the same line of conduct that he does on a smaller; to which I have added, '*what has the Politician to do, but to apply to the affairs of nations and the intercourse between states, those principles of morality, which he finds in the relations of private life.*'

With regard to the argument founded upon what is considered political expediency, that circumstances may arise, which may compel a statesman, for the promotion of the national safety or happiness, to guide himself by other rules than those which the morality applicable to the transactions of private life prescribes, Mr. Roscoe observes: —

"This theory is, however, false; virtue and true wisdom are inseparable. The real difference between a good and a wicked man consists in their extent of vision, or grasp of mind. The one sees only what is immediately before him, and acts rightly, according to his own perceptions; the other takes in a wider range, and compares the advantages to be obtained by temporary success with the evils that must ultimately result from it. If, for instance, it should appear that by a violation of moral obligation, or national rights, some peculiar advantages might be obtained by one state over another, there have been, and, perhaps, there are, politicians who would not hesitate to avail themselves of so favourable an opportunity, and would, with Mr. Bigland, '*think it a virtue, as being directed to the promotion of national safety, tranquillity, and happiness*;' but the enlightened moralist would look further, and act upon a higher principle. He would know that this temporary

advantage could not be obtained, without opening the way to consequences which he might neither be able to control nor foresee. He would perceive, that one of the first results of his conduct would be the destruction of that mutual confidence which is indispensable to the very existence of human society; he would know that such advantages are temporary, but that principles are eternal, and would not sacrifice the greater to the lesser."

In the spring of the present year, Mr. Roscoe had the gratification of finding his name added to the list of the members of the Philadelphia Linnæan Society. His election was communicated to him in the following letter: —

"Sir,

"I am directed by the Philadelphia Linnæan Society to inform you that they have elected you a member of their association.

"In adding your distinguished name to their list of foreign members, the society have designed to testify the high sense they entertain of your eminence in the science of botany, the promotion of which is one of the objects of their institution.

"I have taken advantage of this opportunity of transmitting you a copy of a Prodromus of a Flora Philadelphica, which I published about

a year since, and of which I beg the favour of your acceptance.

"I am, Sir,

"With very great respect and consideration,

"Your most obedient Servant,

"WILLIAM P. C. BARTON."

"Philadelphia, Jan. 11. 1817."

In consequence of a communication from Sir Joseph Banks, with whom he maintained an occasional correspondence, Mr. Roscoe was induced to make some inquiry into the circumstances of a most singular imposture, attempted at this time to be practised by a female in Liverpool. The nature of the faculty which she pretended to possess is described in Mr. Roscoe's letter, and it will surprise those who have never remarked the extent to which human credulity may be carried, to learn that numbers of sensible and scientific men were persuaded that her pretensions were well founded.

"I have heard," says Sir Joseph Banks, "so much of a woman at Liverpool, who can see with the ends of her fingers when it is light, but cannot, in like manner, see with the ends of her fingers when it is dark, and have been told that two medical men of reputation are convinced that there is no fallacy in this most extraordinary sixth sense, that I am inclined to

hope that you will forgive me, if I request you to take the trouble of inquiring into the evidence and favouring me with your opinion on the subject."

In compliance with the wish thus expressed, Mr. Roscoe, who had already visited the person in question, gave the result of his observations in the following letter: —

"I happen to be in some degree enabled to reply to the inquiries you have done me the honour to make, respecting the person who asserts that she can distinguish colours by the touch; having seen her myself about three months since, and examined her pretensions as accurately as it was in my power. She is a young woman about eighteen years of age, and much indisposed by a complaint, supposed to be water on the brain, and which is said to have deprived her of sight. Her friends and connections are decent and respectable Roman Catholics; neither she, nor they, intrude themselves on the notice of the public. When her health will permit, they allow visitors to see her, but they do not accept of any compensation whatever.

"When I saw her, she was seated by the fireside; seemed in tolerable spirits, and expressed her willingness to make the experiments required. The only persons present, besides my friend Mr. George Walker, and myself, were a

respectable looking woman, who is, I believe, her step-mother, and Mr. Glover, a Catholic priest, who appeared a very well-informed and candid man. A pair of hood-winks, or goggles, were produced, and fixed over her eyes, and, as it appeared to us, so tight, as to render it impossible for her to see any object, however perfect her eyes might be. We then placed in her hand successively, various pieces of coloured silk and paper, which we had brought with us for that purpose, having the precaution to take them privately to her, so as not to let any one see them, and put them under her cloak or shawl, where she received them, and, after feeling and considering them for a few minutes, gave her decisions upon them.

"These, however, though frequently correct, were not uniformly so; and we were at considerable pains to find out the reason of this variation. After some time, we discovered, that when any opake object was interposed between the direct line of her eyes and her hands, — for instance, when I held my hat silently before her, — she seemed reduced to guess at the colour, and was frequently wrong. And when she found this repeated, she insinuated that there must be no interruption between her breath and her hands; supposing, as we understood her, that her breath was necessary to add to the delicacy of her touch.

"Upon the whole, I was by no means convinced of the existence of so extraordinary a faculty, and am still much more inclined to believe that she by some means obtained a glance below the hood-winks than to give her credit for her pretensions. What occurred afterwards rather confirmed than removed my doubts. She undertook to read by the touch a printed paper, in which she made out some words; and her friends assured us she could frequently read as much as half a page in a small type. Her mother then went out of the room and brought in a small bottle with a blue powder within, and giving it into her hand asked her what was the colour of it; to which she replied, 'blue smalt.' This answer proved too much for my credulity, and I have not since repeated my visit.

"I am greatly confirmed in my unbelief by the very decided opinions of my friend, Dr. Traill and Dr. Vose, who have examined her with great accuracy, and found, that when the possibility of vision was interrupted by stopping the space between the hood-winks and the nose with cotton, her faculty was gone. There are, however, I am told, many scientific and well-informed persons here who fully believe in her pretensions, and I, therefore, beg you will have the goodness to understand me, as only speaking of my own impressions, and not presuming to judge of others,

who may not only be better qualified, but have taken much more pains on the subject."

Mr. Roscoe also transmitted to Sir Joseph Bankes, a volume, containing the case of Miss M'Avoy, and asserting the reality of her pretensions.

"I beg of you," says Sir Joseph, in reply, "to accept my thanks for the book you were so good as to send me. I cannot say, however, that I am at all convinced that your lady possesses the powers she pretends to enjoy. As long as she contented herself with judging by the sense of touch, I might wonder, but I dared not to disbelieve; but now that touch is intercepted by a plate of glass, which nothing but the sense of vision can penetrate, her fingers must have eyes in them, or she must be a deceiver. But when she finds a print too small for her, and receives aid in reading it from a lens laid upon it, her finger-eyes must be of a strange configuration, as she has no occasion to adjust them to the focus of the lens."

The imposture did not long remain undetected. By the application of a number of ingenious experiments, it was ascertained, that however closely the covering of the eyes was fixed, a few rays of light penetrated, and enabled Miss M'Avoy to use the eyes in her head without any assistance from those in her fingers.

The whole of the year 1818 was devoted by Mr. Roscoe to the settlement of the affairs of the bank. The few vacant hours which the evening afforded him were passed in necessary relaxation; for he was fortunately at this time exempt from any literary engagements. It was not until the close of the year, that he began to meditate his tract on penal jurisprudence, of which some account will be found in a subsequent chapter.

Amongst the minor literary employments in which he interested himself at this period, was the superintending, in conjunction with some of his friends, the publication of a new edition of a collection of hymns, for the use of the congregation of Protestant dissenters, at Renshaw Street. Liverpool, of which he was a member. To this volume he contributed several pieces*, and amongst the rest the following anthem:—

* The following is a correct list of his contributions, made out by Mr. Roscoe himself, by the desire of a gentleman at Gloucester, who was preparing a Collection of Hymns:—

25. "Almighty God, before whose throne."
65. "Almighty Father, thou whose power."
166. "Go, suffering habitant of earth."
255. "Who gave the sun his noonday light?"
268. "Great God, before whose piercing eye."
343. "Oh when shall this aspiring soul."
357. "What is the first and great command?"
405. "Let one loud song of praise arise."
413. Anthem.

" Holy, holy, holy
Lord God Almighty!
Thou to whom alone are
All praise and glory due!
Holy, holy, holy
Lord God Almighty,
Father everlasting!
Righteous, just, and true!

" Bending down before thee,
Lo! thy sons adore thee,
Hand and voice declaring
Jehovah is thy name:
Winds in tempests blowing,
Waves o'er ocean flowing,
To remotest regions
Thy might and power proclaim.

" In the heaven's expansion
Thou hast fix'd thy mansion,
Clouds of endless glory
Encompassing thy throne!
Heard but in thy thunders!
Seen but in thy wonders!
Through eternal ages,
Thou art God alone!

" 'Tis thy breath informs us,
'Tis thy spirit warms us;
If thy face be turned
We should cease to be.
Height nor depth oppose thee,
Trembling nature knows thee;
Through the vast creation
There is none but thee.

" Holy, holy, holy
Lord God Almighty!
Thou to whom alone are
All praise and glory due!
Holy, holy, holy
Lord God Almighty!
Father everlasting!
Righteous, just, and true!" *

The circumstances in which Mr. Roscoe was placed having induced a very general idea that he would again devote his pen to literature, several applications were made to him by respectable booksellers, with the view of engaging his services. To a communication from Edinburgh, respecting a history of the state of Europe (a subject which appears afterwards to have been intrusted to Sir Walter Scott, and to have been the origin of his Life of Napoleon), Mr. Roscoe made the following reply:—

" At an earlier period of life, and under circumstances of greater leisure, there are few works which I should have undertaken with more willingness than a history of the state of Europe, and of the causes and effects of the revolution in France. Of these astonishing events, I have been an anxious though remote observer; and am of opinion, that if they were properly narrated, combined, and commented upon, they

* This anthem was, with much taste and feeling, set to music by Mr. Webbe.

would afford lessons of greater interest and importance to the world, than any subject that has ever employed the pen of the historian. I cannot, however, but be sensible, that the utility and success of such a work must depend entirely on the ability brought to the undertaking; and although in the warmth of youth I might have overlooked this consideration, it appears at present with too formidable an aspect to allow me to contemplate a work of such magnitude and difficulty without shrinking from the task. I confess it is not without reluctance that I decline the proposition adverted to in your letter, and resign the work into other hands. At the same time, if, upon further deliberation, I should think there was a possibility of confining it within a moderate compass, so as to bring it within the limits of my powers, and allow myself a reasonable expectation of accomplishing it, I may, perhaps, reconsider my present determination; but unless you hear from me again within a very few weeks, you will be pleased to consider that determination as decisive."

The variety and weight of his other occupations confirmed this decision, and Mr. Roscoe abandoned all idea of the undertaking.

There were few persons, either at home or abroad, for whose character Mr. Roscoe entertained a greater respect, or, indeed, a deeper veneration, than for that of M. la Fayette. The

simplicity of heart, and the undeviating rectitude of conduct, which the life of that great man displays, had won his entire esteem. It was, therefore, with much pleasure, that he availed himself of an opportunity afforded him in the spring of this year, to convey to M. la Fayette, through his friend Mr. M'Creery, the assurance of these sentiments.

"I cannot suffer you to take your departure without accompanying you with my best wishes that your journey may be safe, pleasant, and prosperous, and that you may bring back those who are so dear to you as much improved in their health as I am sure they will be in their acquirements.

"Should you happen to meet with M. la Fayette, will you have the goodness to tell him that there is an individual here who has never ceased to interest himself in his welfare, and who has been happy to hear the favourable accounts given of his health and present situation, as well by some of our English travellers, as by some of his friends here, among whom I may mention M. Masclet, with whom I have often the pleasure of conversing respecting him. Yes, my friend, if you should have the good fortune to see M. la Fayette, you will see one of the very few men who know how to withstand the allurements of rank and power on the one hand, and the destructive rage of popular fury on the

other, and who, notwithstanding all he has suffered, and the destruction of all his hopes for the liberty and happiness of the human race, may look back on his public life, not only with his own approbation, but with the assurance that he has obtained that of every other friend of freedom in every part of the civilised world."

The following is the account which Mr. M'Creery gave of his interview with M. la Fayette:—

—"I remained three weeks and two days at Paris, and was highly gratified, not only with the specimens of art with which that city abounds, but with the friendly reception which I met with from some of the first characters there. I had the pleasure of an introduction to General la Fayette, to whom I presented your letter, which he read with great interest; and at parting, pressing one of my hands most kindly between his, bade me tell you how much he felt the value of your good opinion, and begged, if you ever visited Paris, that you would do him the pleasure of calling upon him. I promised faithfully to deliver his regards to you, and it occurred to me afterwards that it might be agreeable to him to possess your letter. In a conversation with the friend who introduced me, I mentioned this idea, and he assured me that nothing could be a greater pleasure to M. la Fayette, and that if I would intrust it

to him, as he was going to visit him the subsequent week at his country house, he would be the bearer of it. I accordingly committed it to his care (having kept a copy), together with a copy of your '*Tracts on the War*,' both of which will be very acceptable presents."

A few months afterwards, M. la Fayette himself expressed to Mr. Roscoe his feelings of mutual esteem, in the following letter:—

La Grange, 20 Août, 1818.

"MONSIEUR,

"L'admiration ancienne et bien sincère que m'inspiraient votre caractère et vos écrits, a donné un grand prix aux témoignages de bienveillance et d'estime dont vous m'avez honoré; c'est avec autant de plaisir que de reconnoissance que je les ai réçus, tant ceux dont MM. M'Creery, Say, et Masclet, ont bien voulu être les interprêtes, que les envois directs dont j'aime à vous avoir l'obligation; j'y ai retrouvé les principes et les sentiments qui m'avaient attaché à vos travaux précédents, et c'est cette communauté d'opinion sur les rapports politiques de nos deux païs qui m'attachent bien particulièrement à votre personne. Il faut espérer que les nations, averties par cette dernière et cruelle épreuve, éclairées par le rapide progrès des lumières sur l'horison Européen, ne seront plus à l'avenir les dupes du Machiavelisme et des passions de leurs gouvernements; elles apprendront enfin

qu'entre les peuples divers, comme entre les membres d'une même société, il n'arrive pas une avantage particulière qui ne devienne bientôt l'avantage de tous; on réconnait déjà que, si les Etâts Unis eussent été subjugués, l'Angleterre aurait aujourd'hui beaucoup moins de liberté et de commerce; il est facile de voir par l'acharnement de nos adversaires de tous les païs, que la liberté Française est devenue nécessaire à celle d'Europe, et nommement à la votre.

" Continuez, Monsieur, à proclamer les vérités philanthropiques: votre réputation et vos talens sont bien propres à les rendre populaires parmi vos compatriotes. Elles trouveront en France toute la sympathie que vous pouvez désirer. Je serais très-heureux que vous puissiez en être témoin, et j'espère qu'alors nous aurions la satisfaction, ma famille et moi, de vous posséder à La Grange. Agréez, en attendant, l'expression de la vive gratitude, de la haute considération, et du sincère attachement que je vous ai voué.

" La Fayette."

To this communication Mr. Roscoe made the following reply:—

" The letter with which you have honoured me has afforded me the sincerest pleasure; not merely as it gratifies me with a direct communication from one whom I have ever regarded with the sincerest admiration and respect, but as it

proves, that after a series of events, such as few persons have ever experienced, you still preserve your health and spirits uninjured, and enjoy the happiness of looking back on those events with the consciousness of one who has steered a direct and steady course, under circumstances almost too much for human fortitude to sustain. Grieving as I do for the defeated efforts and blighted prospects of liberty,—of that rational and temperate liberty, which equally rejects the anarchy of the many, or the despotism of the few,—it is with tenfold pleasure that I can yet turn towards one of her firmest adherents, and console myself in the idea, that such an example will not be lost to the world. No, my dear Sir, the salt hath not lost its savour, nor is the cause of the human race hopeless. A few works, surviving the wreck of ages, have preserved to mankind the memorials of science and of art; and a few names, illuminating the page of history, will afford a strong and steady light to ages yet to come.

"Instead of continually lamenting what we have lost, it is, perhaps, wiser to avail ourselves as well as we can of the little that has been saved. The former can only open those wounds which it is desirable should be for ever closed; the latter affords us a consolatory hope, that the favourable appearance at present observable in France may be realised; that a limited monarchy, recognising the rights of the people, may be es-

tablished; and that sacrifices, such as no other nation ever made, may not have been made in vain.

"In expressing these wishes for the prosperity of your country, I am sensible how nearly I sympathise with your own;—to express them to you in person would be a still greater happiness; but, although the distance which separates us is not great, I fear I must not flatter myself with the hope of seeing you in your retirement. It will, however, afford me a consolation, that I have been favoured with the kind assurances contained in your letter, which I enjoyed the more, as I feel, that as far as a concordance of sentiment and the most sincere and habitual attachment can lay claim to them, I may hope to merit a continuance of them."

The efforts which Mr. Roscoe, at this period of his life, made, in the midst of the harassing and anxious labours which the settlement of his affairs imposed upon him, to render himself in some degree useful to the public, by contributing to the establishment of institutions for the diffusion of knowledge, and by endeavouring to spread abroad just principles with regard to the various subjects in which the welfare of mankind is involved, proceeded from a firm and deep-seated sentiment of duty. In those hours of depression which the painful situation in which he had been placed sometimes caused, he never

regretted the loss, to himself or to his family, of those advantages which fortune is commonly supposed to bestow. To him the source of sorrow was, that he had not been enabled more effectually to promote the welfare of his fellow-creatures, and to carry into effect the extended views which he entertained for their happiness and improvement. As he saw himself approaching the termination of life, and knew how few years remained for the accomplishment of that which his heart desired, a sentiment like that of disappointment overclouded his mind; and it was while under the influence of these feelings, that the following lines, perhaps the most touching that ever proceeded from his pen, were written:—

"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him"—*Job*, xiii. 15.

God of my life, my hope, my fear,
In whom alone is all my trust,
I feel the closing hour draw near
That gives this fainting frame to dust.

Like the tired hart, at bay I stand,
Thy toils have compass'd me around;
I wait the death-stroke from thine hand,
And stoop resign'd to meet the wound.

Yet one fond wish still warms my soul,
To thee in humblest hope exprest,
That, ere the darkening shadows roll
To close me in their final rest,

Thou wouldst some worthier aim inspire,
Some living energy impart,
Some holier spark of purer fire
Rekindling in my dying heart;

That when, removed from grief and pain,
This fragile form on earth shall lie,
Some happier effort may remain
To touch one human heart with joy;

One nobler precept to bestow,
One kind and generous wish reveal,
To bid the breast with virtue glow
To love, to pity, and to feel;

To soothe the ills it cannot cure,
The sufferer's injuries redress;
And through life's varied channels pour
The living stream of happiness.

Then, though in cold oblivion laid,
Some secret beam of heavenly glow
May pierce the dark incumbent shade,
And warm the dust that rests below.

This mouldering form, from God that came,
An instrument at his command,
Waits silent yet, through all its frame
The impulse of its Master's hand.

Smite, Lord! this frame shall own thy power,
And every trembling chord reply;
Smite, Lord! and, in my latest hour,
This falling frame shall ring with joy!

8th Feb. 1818.

CHAPTER XVI.

1819.

The nature and objects of punishment. — Mr. Roscoe's attention turned to the question. — Publication of his "Observations on Penal Jurisprudence and the Reformation of Offenders." — His idea of the true guiding principle — of secondary punishments. — Consideration of the penitentiary system. — Apathy of the public mind to this subject. — Letter to Dr. Parr, with copy of the Tract — to Mr. Basil Montagu. — He derives assistance from America through Mr. Thomas Eddy — letter to him. — Article in the Edinburgh Review against Prison Discipline controverted by Mr. Roscoe in "Additional Observations." — Solitary confinement in America opposed in this tract — copy sent to Mr. Jeffrey — letter to him. — Corresponds with Mr. Livingston and other distinguished Americans. — Letter from Mr. Bradford, Governor of Massachussetts State Prison. — Letter to Sir James Mackintosh — his reply — his remarks in the House of Commons — letter to him from Mr. Roscoe thereon. — Reforms in Denmark. — Letter from Mr. Thorkelin of Copenhagen. — Publication of "Observations," Part III. — Letter to Sir James Mackintosh — to Mr. Dumont. — Publication of "Remarks on the Report of the Commissioners for Visiting the the Prisons of New York, &c." — Letter to Dr. Southwood Smith — to M. la Fayette, then in America — his reply. — Controversy with Mr. Allen of New York and others. — Publication of Letter to him on Penitentiary Discipline. — Series of Letters to Mr. Vaux, Dr. Mease, and Mr. Allen, published in the Liverpool Newspapers. — Change of opinion in the United States in favour of reformatory discipline. — Mr. Roscoe expresses his pleasure in a letter to Dr. Hosack of New York.

CHAPTER XVI.

It was only late in life that the attention of Mr. Roscoe was directed to one of the most important questions in the whole range of human inquiry—the nature and objects of punishment. While various degrees of severity have been exhibited in the codes of different nations, and various theories have been proposed restricting or modifying the application of punishments, there has yet been only one prevailing principle observable throughout — the principle of *fear*. The criminal is considered as a being to be acted upon solely by means of terror, and utterly incapable of being governed by the other motives which usually actuate mankind. Indignant at the injury which the crime has occasioned, the lawgiver abandons all consideration for the moral character of the criminal, and contents himself with inflicting a punishment which may at once terrify him from a repetition of the offence, and impress upon others a striking lesson of the severity of justice.

To Mr. Roscoe it seemed that this system was essentially erroneous. He thought that in

attributing so superior a degree of influence to the passion of fear, legislators had made a wrong estimate of the human mind. It was his opinion that the actions of men are not only more effectually, but more easily, governed, by higher and better motives than those which terror supplies; and that it is not more reasonable to attempt to govern the vicious and the criminal by a system of unmingled severity, than to apply those principles to the control of a nation or to the management of a family. He was fully persuaded that in this, as in other instances, the only safe guide was that benevolent rule which has commanded us to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us; and that a system which disregards the moral improvement of those who unfortunately form so large a class of the community, and consigns them to punishment, without the hope of amendment, is one which not only impedes the good which a better system might effect, but is the actual and positive source of much evil.

The immediate cause which led Mr. Roscoe to employ his pen on the subject of penal jurisprudence appears to have been an application made to him in the year 1817, by Dr. Lushington, on behalf of the Society for the Diffusion of knowledge on the subject of capital punishment, requesting him to furnish the committee of the Society with a short tract, containing,

in a condensed form, the various arguments against the punishment of death. Having, in consequence of this communication, been led to examine some of the principal writers on penal jurisprudence, he found so wide a field of inquiry opened, that he was induced to pursue the subject, and to enter into an extended investigation of the principles of penal law. In the course of these inquiries he did not fail to apply to this subject the great principles which had guided his judgment upon every other question; and he quickly detected the vice of all the prevailing systems of criminal jurisprudence, in the absence of that spirit of benevolence which ought to be the active and moving principle in every system of laws. He found that even the advocates of mitigated punishments maintained the doctrine that "vengeance" is "the foundation of punishments," and that to deter by *example* is the great object of the law. To him it appeared, that to act from the impulse of anger (which, if it mean any thing, means an exaggerated state of feeling produced by injury,) was to abandon the judgment to the guidance of the passions, and that the attempt to deter by example had led to the commission of greater atrocities than those which the legislator sought to prevent. He thought that it became the state to prevent useless suffering in the guilty as well as in the innocent; and that when

a certain quantity of evil has been produced by the commission of a crime, it is unwise to aggravate it by the additional evil of a useless or excessive punishment. To reform the criminal, while he underwent the punishment awarded, appeared to him the most effectual mode of preventing crime, and he therefore regarded reformation as one of the principal objects of penal jurisprudence. These principles he endeavoured to enforce in a volume published in the spring of the present year, to which he gave the title of "*Observations on Penal Jurisprudence, and the Reformation of Offenders.*"*

In the following passage he has stated what he conceived to be the true guiding principle in penal legislation:—"If we could divest ourselves of those resentful feelings which are too apt to take possession of our minds on the contemplation of acts of criminality, we should make one great step towards the discovery of a better system of jurisprudence, and prepare the way to an incalculable improvement in the condition of mankind. The correction of vice would then be no longer an exertion of the violent and hostile passions, but of the kind and benignant affections. By the most salutary change, the very errors and crimes of the profligate would afford to the good an opportunity for the exercise of

* 8vo. London. Cadell and Davies, and J. and A. Arch.

the highest virtues. The question would no longer be, whether stripes and bloodshed can prevail against guilt and ignorance, but whether sympathy, prudence, and compassion have lost their influence on the moral feelings of mankind. If we could impress upon the mind of the delinquent an idea that the efforts we are making are really intended for his welfare, our object would, in a great degree, be accomplished. There is no human being so stupid, or so wicked, as not to concur, to the utmost of his power, in measures evidently calculated to relieve him from misery."

After some observations "on the motives and end of punishment," he shortly examines the plea of *example*, so frequently urged as an excuse for the severity of the penal code:—"The inconsiderate and sanguinary lawgiver takes it for granted, that severe and horrible punishments *will* deter others from the commission of crimes; but has it never occurred to him, that by exhibiting frequent and revolting spectacles of inhumanity and bloodshed, he has counteracted his own object, and weakened in the public mind that natural reluctance to the shedding of human blood, which is one of the great safeguards of human society? In order to demonstrate to a people that they ought not to be cruel, he sets an example of cruelty; and in order to deter them from putting each other to

death, he puts them to death himself; and *that*, frequently, by such acts of inhuman atrocity and savage barbarity, as the most ferocious criminal was never known to commit, till the common decency, no less than the common feelings of mankind revolt against the abuse, and it becomes a matter of doubt whether the detestation of the punishment does not exceed the detestation of the crime."

In his remarks "on punishments of inferior degree," or secondary punishments, as they have been termed, he has exposed their tendency to deprave rather than to reform those who are subjected to them. "By what degrees the author of a petty theft is brought forwards and matured, and how many of these whippings must be administered to him before he is hardened to robbery and murder, must be left to conjecture only. But if the individual has been ruined by being whipped and discharged, what has the public gained by it? Are there not in town and country many thousands of these wretches, of both sexes and of all ages, daily employed in depredation and in plunder, to the great loss, annoyance, and terror of the industrious part of the community; who are not only stripped of their property, but frequently compelled to become prosecutors at their own expense, and to attend distant courts of justice, without the prospect of any compensation? If, instead of

being whipped and discharged, these culprits had been detained in custody and set to hard labour till they had acquired a habit of industry, and had been compelled to repay to those they had robbed the amount of their losses; if, instead of disseminating through the land every species of wickedness, they had themselves received the instructions of compassionate and patient friends, and been restored to society under circumstances of credit and decency, can there be a doubt that the public would have been benefited by such a change?"

After discussing certain proposed improvements in criminal laws, and displaying the injustice and unreasonableness of applying one and the same punishment to a whole class of offenders, he thus proceeds:—"On this subject, then, one of the most important which can engage the attention of the human faculties, it is highly requisite that a thorough investigation should take place; in the result of which it may, perhaps, appear, that there is no short and expeditious way of extirpating moral evil, and that if we wish to succeed, we must enter on the task with a full conviction of its importance, and a sincere resolution to bend ourselves down to the labour. We must inquire into the character, temper, and moral constitution of the individual, and acquaint ourselves with his natural or acquired talents, his habits, and his

views, in order that we may be enabled to adopt such measures for his improvement as may be best adapted to the case. If he be ignorant, we must instruct him; if he be obstinate and arrogant, we must humiliate him; if he be indolent, we must rouse him; if he be desponding, we must encourage him; and this, it is evident, cannot be accomplished without resorting to different modes of treatment, and the full exercise of those moral and sympathetic endowments which subsist, in a greater or less degree, between all human beings, as incident to our common nature."

These reflections lead to the consideration of the Penitentiary System, as it has been tried in America, on the continent of Europe, and in England, a subject to which the remainder of the volume is devoted. This system was regarded by Mr. Roscoe as the true means not only of punishing, but of repressing crime. "In adverting," he says, "to the code of criminal law, which has been so long established in Europe, and comparing it with the proposed system which has for its object the reformation of offenders, we find them in almost every point of view the reverse of each other. The former owes its origin to those vindictive feelings which are incident to a rude state of society; the other is founded on Christian principles, and applies the precepts of our religion to the conduct of

our lives. The one proposes to prevent crimes by the example of severe punishments; the other conceives that the best example is that of a criminal brought by proper discipline to a due sense of his crime. By the operation of the former, great numbers of offenders perish in the strength and thoughtlessness of life; the other endeavours to preserve rather than to destroy; it considers a criminal as an unfortunate fellow creature, led on to guilt through a great variety of causes, but capable, by kindness, patience, and proper discipline, of being reformed and restored to society. The former plan cherishes and inflames amongst mankind the feelings of anger and revenge, and employs the mind upon the most hateful of all subjects — the devising modes of punishing or tormenting another; the other embraces all mankind as brethren, and finds in the idea of recalling a fellow creature from guilt to rectitude the highest gratification. Even when compared with the milder system of criminal law, so eloquently recommended by many enlightened writers, the advantage is greatly in favour of the penitentiary plan. The one supposes that it is possible to *apportion* punishments to crimes, and that such punishments should be *invariably inflicted;* the other admits of no punishment but such as is necessary to reform the offender, and is as ready to pardon

on evidence of repentance as to convict on evidence of the crime; applying to practice, on all occasions, the Christian precept, '*Do unto all men as ye would they should do unto you.*' To extend this comparison further is surely unnecessary. If the latter plan can by any exertion be substituted for the former, is it possible that any one can doubt of its expediency?"

In noticing the eulogy pronounced by Dr. Paley upon the criminal law, as "sweeping into its net every crime which, under any possible circumstances, may merit the punishment of death," Mr. Roscoe adds;—"the fallacy of this statement has been fully shown by Sir Samuel Romilly, by whose enlightened efforts and indefatigable exertions some of the most cruel and obnoxious of these statutes have been repealed. It is not, however, by the success that has attended his labours that we must estimate what is due from the community to this real patriot and distinguished senator. The reforms effected by him bear, indeed, a small proportion to the enormous mass of sanguinary enactments which disgrace our statute book; but the maxims of legislation which he has laid down, and the sound principles for which he has contended, apply to the whole system; and will, it may confidently be hoped, eventually produce such alterations, as may remove from our judicial code the imputation of cruelty on the one hand,

and prevent the impunity of the criminal on the other."

While the portion of the tract containing this passage was yet in the press, Mr. Roscoe received the distressing intelligence of the death of the excellent and distinguished person, to whose extraordinary merits he had been anxious to offer his testimony. In a letter to Mr. M'Creery, who was printing the work, he says, "The afflicting loss of Sir S. Romilly, to whose friendly opinion I had looked forward with such pleasure, has rendered it necessary for me to add a note on the part where I had mentioned him, which I hope you will approve as being the view most connected with my work, and avoiding the common-place eulogies on such occasions." The note ran as follows: —

"May this expectation be accomplished! for since the above was written, the world has been deprived of the illustrious individual to whom it relates, and can now only avail itself of the lessons which he has left for its improvement. May we not, however, venture to hope, from the sincere sympathy and universal grief which this event has occasioned, that the cause he so warmly espoused and the sentiments he so forcibly expressed are deeply felt by the nation at large; and that his loss will, as far as possible, be repaid by an increased determination on their

part to promote the great and beneficent objects which he so faithfully pursued? Such a result of his labours may delight his spirit, and add to his happiness in the regions of the blest."

The subject of prison discipline is one which has only of late years engaged any degree of attention, and it possesses even yet little interest for the public at large. While in America associations are formed to forward the enquiries into this important subject, and individuals zealously devote themselves to the promotion of the same objects, the English public exhibit an apathy with regard to them by no means creditable either to the good sense or the good feeling of the community. —

"I have scarcely heard a word," says Mr. Roscoe in a letter to Mr. M'Creery, "from the great world about my late publication, from which I conjecture that it does not exactly hit the public taste, and that the old system of hanging, transporting, and flogging will be continued. I shall, therefore, only say, *liberavi conscientiam meam*, and leave the good seed to grow up at such time and in such places as Providence may direct."

Amongst the various writers whose works Mr. Roscoe consulted while investigating the subject of penal jurisprudence was Dr. Parr, to whose remarks on punishments, contained in the notes to his *Characters of Fox*, he attached the highest

value. Upon the publication of the "Observations on Penal Jurisprudence," he forwarded to Dr. Parr a copy of that tract, accompanied by the following letter: —

"With this I send you a book calculated to excite a great diversity of opinion. It begins with an attack upon a very worthy and excellent friend of ours, and it calls in your assistance to knock him down, which you have effectually done. It then proceeds to plead the cause of all the rascals in the nation, and it sets you up as their advocate. It not only objects to any more hanging, flogging, &c., but proposes to get clear of punishments altogether, and even presumes to treat the *proportioning of punishments to crime* as an Utopian scheme, which never can be carried into effect. After all this, the author turns short upon *you*, his great support; and presumes to criticise you in a manner that it will require all your good nature to pardon. For all this he has only one apology, viz. that the importance of the subject was such that he could neither suppress nor accommodate his opinion. He can, however, explicitly declare, that in the course of his researches on the subject, he has found no writer who has entered so deeply into it, and with such a true feeling for human nature, as *yourself;* and on this account you must not be surprised to find your *nom de guerre* frequently introduced. I am sensible, my dear

Sir, that if I had been so fortunate as to have had the benefit of your observations and advice in drawing up these pages, I should have avoided many errors, the apprehension of which gives me no small uneasiness. But this is now too late; and I submit the work to your candid judgment, with the hope that the kindness and partiality you have shown me on other occasions will not be withheld on the present."

To Mr. Basil Montagu, from whom he had differed on some points of importance, he also addressed the following letter: —

"I ought long ago to have thanked you for your very kind remembrance of me in sending me your observations respecting the punishment of death, which arrived at a moment when I had turned my attention towards the same subject, with a view to publication. I was, therefore, earnest to learn your sentiments, which I had flattered myself would, in all points, be in perfect unison with my own; but judge how I was surprised to find that we differed on the very threshold, — that you had considered anger and revenge as not only allowable but necessary, whilst I had contended that kindness and benevolence were the true principles of penal law. After stating your own opinion, you have proceeded to sanction it by the authority of several other distinguished writers, some of whom have carried it to much greater extent. This subject,

thus treated from such a quarter, appeared to me so important, that I could not proceed further without paying it the utmost attention, and either admitting its validity or demonstrating its insufficiency; and, as I found the former impossible, I have been obliged to undertake the latter, — with what success, I must leave the public to judge. Having, however, once been obliged to dissent, I have not hesitated to do it fairly and openly; and, in the little work which I am now about to publish, you will find yourself placed in the front of the battle, and assailed with such arguments as I have been able to bring to bear against you. I will, however, confess that in this opposition, (in which, I trust, nothing unfriendly will be found,) I have it further in view to attract discussion on the subject; in which case I feel confident you will sacrifice any personal feeling, (if it were possible what I have said could give rise to it,) in the hope of doing some substantial good. That the present moment is of the utmost importance we must all perceive, and, to say the truth, I am confident you will be much better pleased with any opposition which may throw light on the subject, than by the greatest honours that mere authorship could confer."

In prosecuting these inquiries, Mr. Roscoe derived much assistance from documents forwarded to him by his friends in America; and

amongst others, by Mr. Thomas Eddy, a gentleman highly distinguished by his benevolent exertions in the cause of penal jurisprudence. To him, upon the publication of his tract, Mr. Roscoe addressed the following letter:—

"With this you will, I hope, receive two copies of my promised treatise *on Penal Jurisprudence*, and *the Reformation of Offenders*, which I submit, with great diffidence, to your judgment and experience; and should feel still more, if I had not in almost every respect conformed to your views, and availed myself of your excellent writings on the subject, which do the greatest credit both to yourself and your country; on which account you will find I have not only occasionally quoted you, but have given the report of the state prison of New York for 1815 (which contains so many of your excellent remarks) entire.

"From the portion of my tract which relates to this country you will perceive, that we are not insensible to the great importance of the penitentiary system, and that some idea of such a plan has been entertained even from a remote period; but *that* which has always been wanting has been, to place it on proper ground, and to substitute a system of benevolence and reformation for one of revenge and punishment.

"If this can be fully effected, every thing else will naturally flow from it, as from a parent

stream; and from the united efforts which are making in almost every part of the civilised world, and the free communication of sentiments between those who are earnest in the cause, I trust that such a foundation will be laid for the moral improvement of mankind, as may allow us to indulge the warmest hopes of a speedy and happy result.

"The publications you were so good as to send me were of the highest value, as they show by a series of experiments, not only what ought to be done in establishing a penitentiary system, but what ought to be *avoided.* On this head, you will see that I have expressed myself with great freedom, and will, perhaps, think I have been more ready to blame than to commend. If, however, I have written without reserve, I have always endeavoured to give reasons for my opinions, and it would give me the greatest pleasure, if any suggestions of mine should be thought worthy the attention of those in your country, who interest themselves in the promotion of these most important and benevolent plans."

In the course of the year 1822 the attention of Mr. Roscoe was again directed to the subject of prison discipline, by an article in the 72d number of the Edinburgh Review, directed against the reformatory system. This was the origin of his tract entitled, "Additional Observations on Penal Jurisprudence and the Re-

formation of Criminals."* The principal object of the law is, according to the reviewer, "to prevent the repetition of the offence by the punishment of the offender." This is stated by Mr. Roscoe to be founded on an erroneous assumption; the principal object being, to prevent the repetition of the offence *by such means as will most effectually accomplish that purpose;* and he argues, that severe punishments have been found insufficient to this end.

He then proceeds to answer the objection, that a reformatory system must, from its want of severity, encourage the commission of crime.

"If persons could be deterred from crimes by any apprehension of the nature of their punishment, there is no circumstance that could have so great an effect for this purpose as the knowledge, that they would be subjected to a course of discipline, that would not be relaxed till it had effected an entire change in their morals and manners, and in all the dissolute habits and evil propensities of their former life. To a wicked disposition, the thoughts of becoming inoffensive, honest, just, and virtuous, is of all things the most hateful, and would consequently be avoided with more care than any punishment of a mere corporal nature. Nor would such apprehension be wholly unfounded. The punishments inflicted on the body are of such a nature, as obstinacy,

* London: Cadell. 1823.

pride, courage, and resolution can successfully resist, even in their most appalling forms; but the pangs and sufferings of an evil conscience, opened to the scene of its own enormities, abominations, and crimes—the overwhelming sense of self-reproach, contrition, and shame—the daily and nightly tears which must be shed before these stains can be washed out—and the dreadful apprehension that reformation has arrived too late, and that the sinner may be cut off before he has had an opportunity of expiating his offence by a better course of life, are, perhaps, the most acute sufferings incident to our nature. Is it then possible, that an establishment, whose professed object is to give to such feelings their full effect, can justly be represented as a place of improper lenity and indulgence? It is true, there is an essential difference in the result of these different modes of discipline. The one leaves the individual in the same, or a worse state of mind than that in which it found him; the other wakes him to new life, and points out to him the path of temporal and eternal happiness; but to the hardened and practised offender, whose life passes in midnight orgies, daring exploits, and criminal gratifications, the apprehension of the latter kind of discipline is, perhaps, the most formidable of the two."

The subject of solitary confinement, as imposed in some of the state prisons of America,

had been noticed by Mr. Roscoe in his former tract, and his attention was again called to this important question by the proceedings of the legislature of Pennsylvania, in 1820. He had also, in consequence of his observations on the penitentiary system in the United States, been led into a correspondence with Dr. James Mease, of Philadelphia, and with William Tudor, Esq., of Boston; and he felt anxious to justify, in his public writings, the part he had thus taken. To this subject, therefore, the remainder of his "Additional Observations" is devoted. Against the system of perfect solitary confinement, by day as well as by night, without employment, he forcibly argues, as being at once cruel, unjust, and useless. When enforced merely for a time, as the means of subduing a hardened and refractory offender, he admits its utility; but, as constituting in itself a scheme of prison discipline, he regards it as one of the most injurious projects ever entertained.

Of the abuses to which such a system must be liable he thus speaks:—

"Independently of the natural and unavoidable consequences of long solitary confinement on the mind and body of the prisoner, which have been so fully detailed by its advocates and promoters, such a mode of punishment is liable to abuses against which it is impossible to guard. If in British prisons, of which publicity is the legal

characteristic, and even in those of the highest reputation, enormities have been discovered in the treatment of prisoners which have called for the interference of the legislature, and occasioned the removal of the keepers, what proceedings may be supposed to take place in a prison from which the public are totally excluded — where the prisoner depends for his daily existence on the diligence of an individual — and where, however severe his treatment may be, he has no one to whom to make his appeal? Humanity shudders at the idea of a weak and perishable being, subject to all the anxieties and infirmities of our nature, enclosed in a narrow cell, beyond the possibility of assistance, under the attacks of sudden disease, or the horrors of phrenzy and despair. Of all modes of torment that human revenge and human cruelty have devised, this seems to be the most perfect; for, in addition to the privation of liberty, and the restriction from every thing that can render life desirable, it extends its terrible influence over the mind and imagination of the prisoner, and removes the irons from the body only that they may enter the more deeply into the soul."

A copy of this tract was transmitted by its author to Mr. Jeffrey, the editor of the "Edinburgh Review," accompanied by the following letter: —

"I should not have taken the liberty of in-

truding on you with the present publication, had it not professed to be an answer to an article in the 'Edinburgh Review;' and I was therefore unwilling you should receive it from any one but myself. The high character which that work so deservedly maintains, and the ability and success with which it has asserted all the great principles which are essential to the well-being of society, render it of importance that when it appears to deviate, though but in a slight degree, from this splendid course, it should not be allowed to pass without some attempt to prevent the injurious consequences that may possibly ensue. There can, indeed, be no doubt that an admission of the propriety of resorting again to severe punishments for our convicts; and, still more, an express recommendation of such measures, in a work so distinguished by its general spirit of justice and humanity as the 'Edinburgh Review,' is more injurious to what I conceive the real interests of society require, than all the writings and arguments that can be produced by the professed advocates of severe and exemplary punishment. On this account I have been induced to lay before the public what has occurred to me on the subject; and I now submit it to your judgment, in full confidence that, whatever you may think of my efforts, you will acquit me of any motive but that of a desire to perform a painful but indispensable duty.

"I rejoice with you on the proceedings on the opening of the Session, and the glorious speech of Mr. Brougham, the dread of tyrants, and the saviour of Europe."

His writings on "Prison Discipline" led Mr. Roscoe into a frequent and highly interesting correspondence with many excellent and distinguished persons in America, amongst whom were Mr. Livingstone, the legislator of Louisiana, now secretary of state; Mr. G. C. Verplanck, of New York; Mr. Josiah Quincy, of Boston; Judge Jackson, of Boston, and several others. The approbation of his labours expressed by persons who had enjoyed opportunities of witnessing the effect of the penitentiary system, could not fail to be most gratifying to him, and it gave him especial pleasure to find that those who were practically engaged in the superintendence of the state prisons added their testimony to the correctness of his opinions.

"I have seen," says Mr. Bradford, the governor of the Massachusetts State Prison, in a letter to Mr. Roscoe, "your 'Additional Observations,' and I have read, with no ordinary satisfaction, your other writings upon the treatment of criminals and penal jurisprudence. Whilst superficial reasoners and disappointed theorists are cavilling against this new system of punishment (so worthy of this enlightened age), and endeavouring, with a spirit of Van-

dalism, to go back to the practice of barbarous times, it is cheering to find such able and humane pens as yours engaged in the defence and support of it. The Edinburgh Review has more than once attacked this new method of treating criminals, and, in very decided terms, denounced the whole plan as faulty and injudicious. I myself had the boldness to reply to this work, and to contend against the doctrine advanced in an article in a former number, and I was pleased to find it better handled in your reply to an article of the same description in a succeeding number.

"I have some pride in believing that you do not essentially differ from me in ideas about this important subject. I perceive that you are not in favour of the present prevailing notion of solitary confinement. I am very sure this will not do, and that, on experiment, the advocates for it, and the community, will be disappointed. And what I fear is, that considering, without reason, and against proof and fair experiment, that the present mode of punishment, viz. confinement to labour, has failed, and placing all their hopes in this last resort of solitary confinement, the whole will be abandoned when this does not succeed.

"I have now been attached to this institution ten years, and have taken some pains to study and learn the effects of this kind of punishment, and its advantages and evils. I am satisfied that

the clamours against it are groundless, and that society derives and enjoys great advantage and security from it."

Amongst those persons whose opinions Mr. Roscoe was more especially desirous of influencing, there was no one more distinguished than Sir James Mackintosh; to whom, on forwarding to him his second pamphlet, he addressed the following letter: —

"Although it is a very long time indeed since I had the pleasure of your society, and that only for a very short period, yet your track has been too public and too intimately connected with the advancement of civilisation to allow me to lose sight of you; to which I cannot refrain from adding, that there is also an unbroken link in the affectionate respect and attachment which you and I entertain in common for the memory of a most dear and lamented friend; which, if this intrusion stood more in want of apology than I trust you will think it does, would itself be sufficient for that purpose. I suspect, however, that this long introduction is more gratifying to my own feelings than necessary to recommend the subject of my letter, which, I well know, cannot of itself fail to attract as much of your attention as it may be in your power to bestow upon it. Conceiving, then, that in the approaching session of parliament you will again take the lead in bringing for-

wards such measures as seem necessary for the improvement of our criminal law, I have taken the liberty of submitting to your inspection a tract which I have just published, under the title of 'Additional Observations on Penal Jurisprudence,' which are in part intended as an answer to an article in the Edinburgh Review for February last, but which also relate to the punishment of criminals, and the treatment of prisoners both in this country and America, and endeavour to ascertain the true principles by which we should be guided with respect to it. It appears to me, from the facts and publications which have come to my knowledge on both sides the Atlantic, that the philanthropic spirit, which, for some years past, has been employed in improving the condition of the most wretched portions of our fellow-creatures, has greatly declined, or has been put down by an opposite body, who have lately risen up in great force, and with unblushing front have endeavoured to recal the enormities of past ages, and to resort, for the reformation of their own species, to punishments of the most brutal and degrading kind. You will perceive I allude to the fashionable punishments of the tread-wheel in this country, and that of solitary confinement, already established in some of the American States, and rapidly extending itself over the rest.

"In this emergency I have not been able to

remain silent, although I can by no means flatter myself with the hope of producing any impression on the public mind, which seems, in every quarter where I have had an opportunity of judging of it, to be fully made up to the most vindictive, severe, and unprofitable kinds of punishment that human invention can devise. If, however, I could hope to suggest an additional argument on this subject, in opposition to a system which I hold in inexpressible abhorrence, I should not regret the time and thought I have employed upon it, and it is with this view I have intruded on a few of my friends, who, I know, feel an interest in every thing which tends to the extinction of crime and the mitigation of suffering, with a copy of my tract. Among these you stand too eminently conspicuous to escape the trouble I give you, as well by my pamphlet as by this long epistle, which may at least serve to assure you," &c.

"I ought long before now," says Sir James, in answer, "to have thanked you for your excellent tract, and for the very kind letter which accompanied it. I have never ceased to recollect with pleasure my meetings with you at the house of our incomparable friend, Dr. Currie. I was prevented so long by indisposition, occupation, and domestic affliction, from replying to your letter, that I at last resolved to answer it in public, which I have done both in the House

of Commons, and at the public meeting of the Prison Discipline Society, on both which occasions I had the pleasure of expressing my esteem and admiration for you, and my conviction that our differences of opinion about punishment are so slight, that they would probably vanish after a very short discussion. Engaged as I am in an endeavour to reduce the number of capital punishments, I cannot have any hope of success in my immediate object, without acquiescing in severe and formidable punishments of a secondary kind. When death is reserved for a very small number of atrocious crimes, I, or some future reformer, will not be precluded from considering what portion of needless severity belongs to secondary punishments."

In a debate which took place in the House of Commons, on the 21st May, 1823, on a motion for a committee to consider the question of the penal laws, Sir James Mackintosh, in adverting to Mr. Roscoe's writings on that subject, observed that, "the author had been a little biassed by misdirected humanity in his hostility to severe secondary punishments, and that they seemed the only road by which we could escape from capital punishments." This circumstance drew from Mr. Roscoe the following letter: —

"Although I did not think I had a right to intrude on you with my acknowledgments for your obliging favour of the 16th June last, yet I

assure you I was not insensible of the honour you had done me in noticing my last publication on the treatment of criminals in terms so favourable to the author. That this was accompanied by an observation, that I had perhaps erred through too much lenity towards offenders, is an imputation which, of all others, I can the most easily bear, as I am fully sensible how much I am yet wanting in those feelings of Christian charity and kindness towards our erring brethren, which I consider as the only solid basis on which we must ever hope for an effectual reform in our criminal law. There is no speculative truth of which I am more fully convinced, than that the real interest of the criminal, and that of society at large, are inseparably united; nor, although I may not live to see it, do I despair that a mode may be adopted by which this speculative truth will be reduced to practice, and the evil and the remedy rendered commensurate to each other."

It was the earnest desire of Mr. Roscoe to spread abroad principles which he conceived to be so essential to the security of society, and the general improvement of mankind. He, therefore, lost no opportunity of calling the attention of his correspondents, both at home and abroad, to the subject which at this time occupied so much of his thoughts. Amongst others, he transmitted copies of his tracts to Mr. Thorkelin,

a learned and enlightened Dane, who held a high office under the Danish government.

"It has given me infinite pleasure," says Mr. Thorkelin, in a letter dated the 10th June, 1823, and written by him in English, "to hear that you have lately published your 'Additional Observations on Penal Jurisprudence.' Heaven grant that your perseverance shall be able to open the eyes of British legislators—of the whole civilised world, and make the rulers confess that their penal laws are in many instances an abominable prostitution of common sense; and that such laws require a speedy reform, raised on the basis of humanity, and efficient plan of obviating crimes; inflicting adequate punishment on criminals; reducing them by penitence to social duties and industry of useful labour; and, finally, enabling them to obtain their own support with honesty, after they are discharged from their imprisonment.

"Your former treatise on penal laws I have read over twenty times, with increased pleasure. I never found, in my opinion, in any other work of that kind, so many good sayings or more good sense.

"It will give you, I hope, no small joy to hear that his Danish Majesty, the best of kings, has of late made many salutary alterations of the penal laws of Danemark, conform with your ideas. His Majesty is, indeed, no less sanguine and in-

defatigable in his beneficent wishes and pursuits, than the two British worthies, the best and greatest friends of mankind, Messrs. Roscoe and Wilberforce. The King of Danemark emancipated the negroes in his West India island, in the year 1792; and long before abolished the slave trade in his dominions than the Lord Castlereagh came to Vienna, and bound the sovereigns of Europe to abolish the hateful trade in human beings. Neither the King of Danemark, nor Roscoe, nor Wilberforce, the earlier movers and patrons of the emancipation, were mentioned. Castlereagh *solus tulit honores.*

"My feebleness makes me throw away my pen; my strength forsakes me; but I trust to recover so far in the course of this summer as to be able more fully to satisfy my duty, and prove to you that I am, and will ever continue, with the most sincere respect," &c. &c.

Another letter from Mr. Thorkelin, at the close of the year, induced Mr. Roscoe to hope that his writings on penal jurisprudence had fallen into hands in which they might tend to produce good results. "Your letter, and 'Additional Observations on the Penal Jurisprudence,' memorials of your friendship and humanity, are most welcome to me, who well know that those tenders of affection are not the common traffic of compliments and professions, which most people give only that they may receive. I need not tell you

with what delight I received the favour of yours. It is better that your excellent nephew, my friend Mr. Daulby, should tell you how often you are in my thoughts, whenever you are named among us. Indeed, your letter restored for a while my broken health and spirits by continual illness.

"Now to your 'Additional Observations on Penal Jurisprudence.' I have read them over and over, and given them to my friend Sir Andrew Sandöe Oersted, who is the first and most enlightened lawyer, and stands high in his Majesty's confidence. He loves and values you highly for your observations, and the principles you have founded on genuine humanity; and Sir Andrew makes use of all his interest to have your salutary plan adopted and pursued with regard to more humane treatment of criminals, and the ways and means of providing them with opportunities of getting honest support by their labour, when restored to liberty. Besides, Sir Andrew has at present taken in hand the arduous task to state rules of punishment adequate to crimes committed in this country. May I live longer, I will not fail to let you know his proceedings; and, with the first opportunity, the last volume of Edda, now in the press, shall be sent.

"In the mean time, let me have some lines (I beseech you), that will give me good account of your health, which concerns me and

every cordial friend to mankind, because I love and esteem you. May you long continue to be the bright ornament of the world, and blessing to your country, your family and friends: it is the constant prayer of him who has the honour to be, with sincere and profound respect," &c.

The kindness of Thorkelin to Mr. Daulby, the nephew of Mr. Roscoe, during his residence in Copenhagen, led the latter, in the course of the present year, to present to him copies of his other works, for which Thorkelin made his acknowledgments in the following letter:—

> "Praise from thy pen 'tis mine with pride to boast,
> He best can give it who deserves the most."

"Honourable, indeed, is that approbation which is bestowed by those who have themselves been the constant objects of universal applause. Accordingly, I esteem the encomium you confer upon me in your letter of March 4th, received through the hands of your excellent nephew, my intimate friend Mr. Daulby, as a distinction of the highest and most illustrious kind. After saying thus much, I must tell you that I have read over and over the works of you, with which you honoured me, at the same time with infinite delight and great benefit to myself. I should have regretted to leave this world without their perusal. Your divine writings reflect high honour upon our times; they are neither an idle show

of science, nor vain ornaments to libraries. They are, on the contrary, necessary parts to the order of things, which were wanted to the glory of England; you have instructed the public, and strengthened the state. And if you did not join profound humility with profound learning, you would permit me to prefer your writings above all shields fallen from heaven, and other gages of greatness, and eternity of empires. I have had many occasions to observe the power, the dignity, the majesty—and I will add, too, the divine efficacy of history; but I never met with so strong an instance of it as in your 'Lives of Lorenzo de' Medicis' and 'Leo the Tenth;' for every line is calculated to make men wise, and their hearts good. You have showed Virtue in all her beauty, and Vice in all her deformity; and so I join my prayers with yours, in the words of Persius:—

'Alme pater divûm! sævos punire tyrannos,
Haud alia ratione velis, cum dira libido
Moveret ingenium, ferventi tincta veneno,
Virtutem videant, intabescantque relicta.'

"I trust and hope Mr. Daulby will have the goodness to be faithful interpreter to my sincere love and profound respect for you. He is now leaving this country; and, of course, he has lodged a needle in my heart which pricks it with incessant desire to see him return soon again. Our mutual adieu will render my desire still keener. I envy his friends (endowed with every

genuine virtue of old England) the happiness of receiving Mr. Daulby in their bosoms. However, I shall never cease to wish every one of you Heaven's best blessings, uninterrupted health, and sufficient means of doing good to mankind.

"As to the rest—as you, dear Sir! has begun to love me, I beseech you, remember me constantly; and when you sacrifice to Love and Charity, allow me some little share of the excess and overflowing of your goodness. May I be so happy as to see you here? Be sure Danemark will receive you gratefully, with open arms, as the man of truth and her best defensor against her ferocious enemies, Canning and Co., in the fatal year 1807. In the mean time, be pleased to accept, with your congenial goodness, some trifling specimens of my studies. Your good nature will so much the more readily grant my presumption a pardon, as it confessedly does not deserve it. I have the honour to remain for ever, with faithful attachment, and profound esteem and respect," &c.

Not satisfied with the endeavours he had made to awaken the public to the importance of the question which had formed the subject of the two tracts already mentioned, Mr. Roscoe, in the year 1825, sent to the press a fresh publication, under the title of "Observations on Penal Jurisprudence, and the Reformation of Offenders. Part III." This work is a summary of the ar-

guments contained in his former tracts, enforced by additional information, and is dedicated to Sir James Mackintosh, whom, at the same time, Mr. Roscoe addressed in the following letter:—

"May I beg you will do me the honour to accept a copy of the third part of my 'Observations on Penal Jurisprudence,' and to excuse the liberty I have taken in publicly inscribing them to you; a liberty which, independently of those sentiments of sincere and friendly attachment which I have so long entertained, I have been induced to take, in the hope of attracting greater notice to my publication by prefacing it with your name, and at the same time of showing that I have understood the notice with which you honoured me in the House of Commons, in the friendly sense in which it was intended, although I could not, without a dereliction of what I conceived to be an indispensable duty, submit to the opinion it pronounced. It would, however, be a proof not only of a want of feeling, but of a presumption on my part, of which I hope I am incapable, if I could publish this small volume, in which I have been obliged to oppose the opinions of so many eminent persons, whom I most highly respect, without the greatest reluctance and anxiety; but being thoroughly convinced, from the best consideration I can give the subject, that no change for the better can take place either in this or any other depart-

ment of human affairs, upon any other principle than that of general benevolence and good will, directed to promote the happiness of all without sacrificing the interests of any, and being decidedly of opinion that this may be most strongly exemplified in the treatment of criminals, and thence, perhaps, extended to all the relations of public life, I have not shrunk from the task I had undertaken, and would rather be considered as an enthusiast than live with the consciousness of having feared to assert, to the utmost of my power, a principle upon which, in proportion as it is adhered to or departed from, the improvement, the dignity, and the happiness of the human race must ultimately depend."

To M. Dumont he wrote as follows: —

"Although it is now many years since I had the pleasure of making your acquaintance, at the same time with that of our late excellent and ever lamented friend, Sir Samuel Romilly, yet I have never ceased to feel a sincere interest in your welfare, and to participate in the efforts in which you have been continually employed, for improving the condition of society, and regulating its concerns upon better principles than the fallacious and temporising expedients at present so generally resorted to. That the progress made in such an undertaking must be slow, you have been too well aware; but, although all is not accomplished, much has been done; and if we

may judge from the circumstances that daily occur, a wiser policy and a better spirit is rapidly diffusing itself in every department of life, from the connections and relations of states, to the regulation of our lowest, and, till of late years, most neglected internal establishments. Amongst the latter of these may be enumerated our prisons and places of punishment, which have, for some years past, attracted the notice of so many able and excellent men, amongst whom none have distinguished themselves more than yourself, as well by your own labours as by the extension you have given to those of Mr. Bentham, to whom every friend of improvement must feel the highest obligations, although he may not always assent to the peculiar mode of discipline which he has endeavoured to promote. Amongst the persons last alluded to, if I were to say I consider myself as an humble associate, I should think it an arrogant assumption, being, in fact, nothing more than an *interloper;* or, to place myself in the most favourable light, a kind of *amicus curiæ*, who suddenly rises up to express some sentiment which he thinks important to the cause in hand, and which he can no longer restrain. With these feelings I published two tracts or pamphlets, in 1819 and 1822, under the title of 'Observations on Penal Jurisprudence,' which have been little read and less noticed; but, as I am aware that nothing can be accom

plished without perseverance, and as the advocates of a cruel and inefficient system of criminal discipline are indefatigable in their exertions, and have even induced many of the friends of the reformatory system, both in England and America, to abandon their primitive object, and resort to the ancient plan of preventing crimes by the influence of terror alone, by which a retrograde step has unfortunately been made in this great undertaking, I have again returned to the charge, and in a third part of my Observations, now just published, have endeavoured to show that vindictive and exemplary punishments are wholly irreconcileable with reformatory discipline; and that it is by the influence of the latter alone that we can ever hope to produce any effect in the diminution of crime.

"Of this tract I now take the liberty of offering a copy to your acceptance, in the hope that you will find it, on the whole, consistent with the opinions which you yourself have so much more effectually advocated; and this step I have been induced to take at this moment, from having observed in the Bibliothèque Universelle, for February, 1825, an article on prison discipline, in which large extracts are made from your report in 1822, to the representative council of Geneva, on the establishment of a penitentiary for that canton; in which the objections to the employment of that brutalising engine, the tread-wheel,

and the advantages of productive labour, and a milder discipline, are stated in that spirit of candour and impartiality by which all your writings are so eminently distinguished.

"That your recommendations have contributed to promote the establishment of a more humane and more effectual system of prison discipline in that enlightened community, consoles me, in some degree, for the regret and anxiety I have lately felt on receiving from Mr. Hopkins, of New York, one of the three commissioners appointed by the legislature of that state, to report on the discipline of their prisons, a copy of their report, in which they have recommended an entire alteration, amounting to the abandonment of the reformatory system, and the establishment of a severe and unremitting plan of compulsory labour, under the immediate discipline of the lash, and the dread of solitary confinement; both of which the jailer may inflict at his own pleasure, so that the former shall not exceed thirty-nine lashes, and the latter twelve months, *at any one time!*

"On receiving this document, I lost no time in transmitting to the commissioners, and several of my friends in New York, the hasty remarks of which I now enclose you a copy; which will, however, I fear, be too late to be of any avail, even if I could flatter myself that they would be likely to produce any effect upon the public de-

liberations of a state, which, as it was one of the first to adopt a reformatory system, and carry it almost to its perfection, is the first to abandon it. But I fear I have already intruded upon you at too great a length. Have the goodness to attribute it not only to the deep interest I take in the subject, but also to the pleasure I feel in addressing myself to one whom I esteem, as well on his own account, as the common friend of several persons of the highest worth and talents, who are now no more, but whose memories will ever be endeared to us both by the most affectionate and most lasting recollections."

Scarcely had the third part of the "Observations on Penal Jurisprudence" passed through the press, when Mr. Roscoe received from America the Report of the three commissioners appointed by the legislature of New York to visit the state prisons at New York and Auburn, and report such alterations and amendments of the laws for the punishment of crimes as they should deem necessary. This document was read by Mr. Roscoe with deep regret, tending, as he thought it did, to the abandonment of that system of reformatory discipline, the efficacy of which he had so strenuously advocated, and substituting for it a scheme of punishment, the foundation of which was severity and terror. Anxious to oppose, so far as his influence extended, the adoption of this plan, he lost no time in prepar-

ing some observations on the Report, which he printed, under the title of "Remarks on the Report of the Commissioners," &c. and immediately transmitted to America. Of this circumstance he thus speaks, in a letter to Dr. Southwood Smith:—

"That I am not very sanguine in my hopes on this head, you will readily believe, when I inform you, that since my tract was printed, and within these few days, I have received from one of the three commissioners at New York, appointed by the legislature to examine and report on the state prisons, a copy of their report of the 15th January last; in which they have, in fact, proposed to the legislature, the total discontinuance of the reformatory system, and the introduction of a plan of severe unmitigated compulsory labour, under the immediate discipline of the whip, and the terror of solitary confinement, both of which the jailer is to be authorised to inflict at his own pleasure. On this document I lost no time in making a few remarks; copies of which I have sent to the commissioners, and to some of my friends in New York, intended rather as a protest against such a measure, than with any hopes of successful opposition, even if the proposed act should not have passed into a law, as will, however, most probably be the case before the arrival of my remarks."

It was at this period that La Fayette was en-

gaged in making his triumphal progress through the United States, and to him Mr. Roscoe appealed in the following letter:—

"Whilst you are enjoying the purest and most honourable triumph that history records, you have friends and admirers in this country, who have traced your progress, and shared in your gratifications, with that sympathy which binds together the common friends of mankind throughout the civilised world; but, although I have the ambition to include myself in that number, I should not, for that reason, have intruded myself, at present, on your indulgence, had it not been from a wish to interest you on a subject respecting which, I am certain, you cannot be indifferent, as it regards one of the most important questions that can affect the security, the welfare, and the character of the human race.

"The system of penitentiary discipline for the reformation of offenders, adopted in the United States of America, has in many places been eminently successful, and has, in the estimate of the rest of the world, given a credit and character to that country not less honourable than that which it derives from so many other causes. I have, however, just received from Mr. Hopkins of New York, (one of the three commissioners appointed by the legislature of that state to examine the state prisons, and report such

plan of discipline as they may think best calculated for the improvement thereof,) a copy of such report, in which I am surprised, and mortified beyond description, to find that it is proposed to abandon the reformatory system altogether, and to substitute for it a plan of severe and compulsory labour, under the immediate discipline of the whip, and the continual dread of solitary confinement; both of which may be inflicted at the absolute will of the agent or jailer. On this plan I have lost no time in drawing up such hasty remarks as occurred to me on its perusal, copies of which I have sent to the commissioners, and to some of my friends in New York; and as I am well convinced that your influence would, at this moment, be more extensively felt than that of any other person in the United States, and as it can never be better exerted than in preventing such a disgrace to the country, and such an outrage against human nature as this plan proposes, I have so far ventured to intrude on your leisure as to submit to your perusal a copy of these remarks, accompanied by a small volume, being the third and last part of my Observations on Penal Jurisprudence, which I am now on the point of publishing here; being an attempt to prevail on my countrymen to adopt an improved system of penitentiary discipline, of which, however, I fear there is but little chance whilst those insti-

tutions which I had pointed out as my models are in danger of being overturned. Whether it may be consistent with the situation in which you stand to express your opinion on the subject, you are the sole judge; but that your heart will plead for the wretched and oppressed criminal — for a criminal may be oppressed — I have no doubt; and it is in that feeling alone that I can hope to find an excuse for the great liberty I have thus taken."

To this letter Mr. Roscoe received the following reply: —

"Your so very interesting letter has reached me at a proper point of my rapid and extensive visits through every state in the union. I have been able to confer with several appropriate persons in Philadelphia, and new York: I have been answered that Mr. Hopkins's personal opinion, although in the name of a committee, was not the opinion of the legislature; and I believe your observations will have a good effect. As to Philadelphia, I had already, on my visit of the last year, expressed my regret that the great expenses of their new penitentiary building had been chiefly calculated on a plan of solitary confinement. This matter has lately become an object of discussion; a copy of your letter, and my own observations, have been requested, and as both opinions are actuated by equally honest and good feelings, as solitary confinement has

never been considered but with a view to reformation, I believe our ideas will have their weight with men who have been discouraged by late failures of success in the reformation plan. It seems to me, two of the inconveniences most complained of might be obviated in making use of the solitary cells to separate the prisoners at night, and multiplying the rooms of common labour, so as to reduce the number in each room to what it was when the population was less dense—an arrangement which would enable the managers to keep distinctions among the men to be reclaimed according to the state of their morals and behaviour.

"It must be said, in justice to my friends of the other opinion, that solitary confinement was never considered by them as has been the case in the prison of Inquisition and the Bastille, but merely as an effective reformation-punishment, and as a preventive against mutual teaching of corruption. The difference is, that we allow it as a punishment of a few days to refractory prisoners, properly inflicted, and they as a more extensive method to make them reflect and reform—a very mistaken notion in my opinion.

"I have had occasion to confer on this matter with friends in New Hampshire, Vermont, and the state of Maine. They are satisfied with their penitentiaries, which are less crowded on

account of their population, and it confirms me in the opinion that several working rooms would answer the purpose."

The remarks on the Report of the New York commissioners led to a discussion which lasted for several years. Unfortunately the parcel containing the copies of that tract sent to America, lay at the Custom House of New York for upwards of a year; but no sooner did it reach the hands of the commissioners, than one of them, the Honourable Stephen Allen, of New York, immediately published an answer to the tract, under the title of "An Examination of the Remarks on the Report of the Commissioners," &c. (New York, 1826.) To this, early in the following year, Mr. Roscoe replied in a pamphlet, entitled "A brief Statement of the Causes which have led to the Abandonment of the celebrated System of Penitentiary Discipline in some of the United States of America, in a Letter to the Honourable S. Allen, of New York." The controversy was continued by Mr. Allen, in his "Observations on Penitentiary Discipline, addressed to William Roscoe, Esq." (New York, 1827,) and by Roberts Vaux, Esq. of Philadelphia, who, in answer to Mr. Roscoe's "Brief Statement," addressed to him a letter in the *National Gazette* of Philadelphia, vindicating the State of Pennsylvania against the imputation of having adopted a cruel system in their

state prisons. Dr. Mease, also, with whom Mr. Roscoe had formerly corresponded on the same subject, addressed a letter to him about the same time in the *United States Gazette.*

Thus called upon from so many quarters, Mr. Roscoe could no longer be silent, and in the course of the year 1827, he addressed to Mr. Vaux, Dr. Mease, and Mr. Allen, a series of letters, which he published in the Liverpool newspapers.* While engaged in preparing for the press his answer to Mr. Allen, he was seized with an alarming illness, from the effects of which he never entirely recovered.

The great question in discussion between Mr. Roscoe and his opponents, was the propriety of substituting solitary confinement for the system of productive labour by day, and separate confinement by night. The discussion of this question was attended with very beneficial effects; and it is, perhaps, not claiming too much for Mr. Roscoe, to attribute, in some degree, the change of opinion which took place upon this subject in the United States to his reasonings, supported as they were by the authority of La Fayette. Even in Pennsylvania, where two large buildings had been erected for the pur-

* Two Letters to Roberts Vaux, Esq. (Liverpool Chronicle, 28th July and 4th August, 1827.) Letter to Dr. Mease (Liverpool Chronicle, October 20. and October 27.). Four Letters to the Hon. S. Allen (Liverpool Chronicle, 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th January, 1828).

pose of solitary confinement, the scheme was abandoned, and the commissioners appointed to report upon the penal code of that state expressed, in their report of the 4th January, 1828, a strong opinion upon its inconveniences and dangers. The report of Mr. Powers, the governor of the prison at Auburn, most satisfactorily confirmed this opinion. "We have thus," he says, "frankly acknowledged and fully exposed a dangerous error, which we believe has been fallen into by carrying the doctrine of solitary confinement entirely too far. It is deemed proper to add, that a majority of the commissioners, who examined this and the New York prison, and whose report will be hereafter alluded to, were entirely against solitary confinement without labour, on the ground of health, expense, reformation, and unnecessary severity, and they give their reasons at length, and with great force." From the Report of the Boston Prison Discipline Society for 1828, it may also be gathered, that the sentiments of General la Fayette and Mr. Roscoe met the approbation of that society.

The prospect thus held out of the reformatory system receiving a full and fair trial in the United States afforded the most sincere gratification to the mind of Mr. Roscoe, who expressed his feelings on the subject in a letter to Dr. Hosack, of New York, dated the 13th July, 1830:—

"As the indisposition to which I have referred attacked me at a time when I was engaged in a debate with some of your countrymen on the subject of prison discipline, my medical friends advised me, for a time, not to enter again upon that subject; and it is only of late that I have been able to say that I have had the satisfaction of hearing of the system of discipline recently established in Pennsylvania; where, for many years, I have been led to expect the adoption of the horrid punishment of solitary confinement, without permitting the convicts to labour, with which view the legislature has erected two large and expensive prisons, intended to confine the prisoners in such a manner, that they should be separated not only by night but by day, and should be deprived of the liberty of working lest it should be an alleviation of their sufferings. Against this inhuman and unchristian like system, my humble voice has been raised, amongst those of many others of more importance, for several years past; but it is only a few weeks since that I have learnt, by a communication of authentic documents from Philadelphia, that the legislature have at length given way to the feelings of humanity, and have determined that the convicts shall be allowed to labour in the day, and shall be instructed for that purpose, as well as in whatever else may be requisite for their reformation. The

commissioners whom the legislature had appointed to consider and report to them on this subject had, indeed, recommended to them in their report that the convicts should be permitted to labour in companies, under proper restriction; but with this the legislature would not comply, which I cannot but greatly regret, although, at the same time, I rejoice that so much has been accomplished; considering the object of labour or no labour as being, in fact, the only question in debate; and being of opinion, for various reasons, that the legislature will yet be obliged to resort to the plan recommended by their commissioners.

"By this decision I conceive the great question of prison discipline, as far as regards the United States, is finally settled; every other place, except Philadelphia, having already adopted that plan, thereby making crime to counteract itself, and repair, as far as possible, the evils it has occasioned. In no country has this principle been so well understood, or carried so far as in your own; and the relinquishment of it for the Bastille system of solitary confinement would have grieved me more than I can express; but, thank God! my dread of that is over. I shall now die in peace, convinced that the time will arrive when my own country will follow the example."

CHAPTER XVII.

1820—1823.

Termination of the affairs of Mr. Roscoe in bankruptcy.—Letters to Mr. M'Creery and Sir J. E. Smith.—His certificate disputed.—He retires to Chat Moss.—Recurs to the perusal of the Italian poets.—Translation from Dante.—His attention again drawn to penal jurisprudence.—Letter expressing his motives for the promulgation of his opinions.—His hesitation between continuing in active life or retiring.—Letter considering and determining this doubt.—Allowance of his certificate.—He returns to Liverpool—retires finally from business.—Sum of money raised for him by his friends.—He again visits Holkham.—Letters from that place.—Literary Projects—visits London—letters from thence—prepares a Catalogue of the MSS. at Holkham—letters to Mr. M'Creery describing his labours—to his daughter.—Lines to Lady Anson on her Birthday.—Letter to Mrs. Rathbone—returns to Liverpool—receives proposals to publish a series of the Italian Authors.—Letters to Mr. Valpy—to Sir J. E. Smith.—Publication of the "Illustrations of the Life of Lorenzo de' Medici."—Writers whom he refutes—M. Sismondi and others.—It is translated into Italian by S. Pecchioli—letter to him.—Letter from M. Sismondi.—Mr. Roscoe's reply—becomes acquainted with M. Sismondi.—Publication of the "Memoir of Richard Roberts Jones," and account of him.—Letter to Dr. Parr.—Anecdotes of R. R. Jones—his portrait, etched by Mrs. Dawson Turner.—Letter to Mr. D. Turner.—Sonnet written while publishing the Memoirs of R. R. Jones.—Mr.

Roscoe removes to Lodge Lane — letter to his daughter. — Dr. Aikin — letters to him on the publication of the "Life of Huet," &c. — Mr. Roscoe's contributions to the Athenæum. — Death of Dr. Aikin. — Letter to Miss Aikin. — He proceeds with the "Life of Pope." — Again visits Holkham. — Letters from that place. — Liverpool Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery. — Mr. Roscoe chosen president. — Draws up a Declaration of the Objects of the Society. — His views as to the best mode of effecting emancipation.

CHAPTER XVII.

The difficulties of carrying into effect the proposed scheme of settling the affairs of the bank continuing to increase, a very small body of the creditors determined to resort to legal proceedings. Two or three actions were commenced; and as it was impossible for Mr. Roscoe to satisfy these persons by the payment of their demands, which would have been an act of injustice to the other creditors, he was compelled to confine himself to his house in order to preserve his personal liberty. It now became obvious, that the further prosecution of the plan which had so deeply engaged his thoughts, and so completely occupied his time since the suspension of the payments of the bank, had become impossible; and a commission of bankruptcy having issued, all the partners in the concern were declared bankrupts. Thus the blow which Mr. Roscoe had so long endeavoured to avert at length descended upon him; but his fortitude and submission enabled him to bear with composure the destruction of the hopes he had so long cherished.

The feelings of his mind under this calamity are well represented in the following short extract from a letter to Mrs. Rathbone:—

"Yesterday, my ever dear friend, my long struggle terminated, and I resigned myself to my inevitable lot, neither sullen nor desponding, but with a calm consciousness that every effort on my part had been made to avert it; and with a firm reliance, that however painful the dispensation may prove, it will be productive of substantial and final good."

In another letter to Sir James Smith he says, "As to my unfortunate partnership concerns, you will have heard that, after all my labour, I have been obliged to relinquish the management into other hands; but, notwithstanding this, I by no means regret the effort. If I have not been able (chiefly from the wretched state of the times, and the fall in all kinds of property,) to accomplish what I expected, I have done more than could otherwise be effected, and this will be a consolation to me under any circumstances in which I can be placed."

The final surrender of his property, and of the management of it into other hands, did not prevent those creditors who had resorted to legal proceedings from still pursuing them; and it was only by the allowance of his certificate of conformity that his person could be protected. The

sense entertained of his conduct by the great body of his creditors was manifested by the almost unexampled celerity with which the requisite number of signatures were affixed to the certificate; but in consequence of a petition against its allowance being presented to the Chancellor by two of the individuals who wished to render their proceedings at law available against his person, the protection which the certificate would have afforded was delayed for several months. During this interval of painful suspense Mr. Roscoe retired to his farm at Chat Moss, where he was compelled to confine himself wholly to the house, debarred even from the exercise necessary to his health. Harassing as this situation was, his mind still remained undepressed; and his letters to his family were full of the unaffected cheerfulness with which he bore the annoyances and inconveniences of his confinement.

Disengaged at length from the deep anxieties with which for the last four years his life had been attended, he recurred with natural ardour to those pleasant pursuits which had been so often the employment of his happier days. He endeavoured, and not without success, to dismiss from his mind the unavailing regrets which the recollection of the past occasioned, and to apply himself anew to the literary studies for which he still

felt so high a relish. Two subjects in particular pressed upon his attention,—the defence of his historical works against the criticisms of M. de Sismondi and others, and some additional observations on the question of penal jurisprudence. In prosecuting the former subject, the Italian poets again came under his notice; and the gratification which their pages afforded him is expressed in the following letter:—

"During my visit here, I have passed many delightful hours in reading Italian poetry, and have had great pleasure in tracing the similarity of sentiment which exists between minds of a similar character, that derive their chief happiness from the exercise of warm and exalted affections; till at length I have convinced myself that there is a community of feeling amongst them wholly independent of chance or circumstance, presence or absence, time or place. Of this I could adduce many beautiful illustrations; but at present I shall only refer to a little detached piece of the celebrated Dante, in which he seems to have sketched the first idea of his Beatrice, whom he has also introduced in his 'Paradiso' as his guide through the celestial regions, and whom he appears to have regarded with a warmth and delicacy of passion far beyond what is found in the writings of any other poet, even of Petrarca himself.

"FROM THE ITALIAN OF 'DANTE ALIGHIERI.'

"'Of loveliest feature and of lightest form,
A stranger here, to glad your sight I come,
With interview of heaven—pleas'd to perform
The task assign'd—then seek my native home—
Scattering delight where'er my course I bend,
That whoso sees me, and refrains from love,
Of love is all insensible,—for when
Nature, from Him whose gracious will did send
Me here, entreated I might be, oh! then
To perfect me with beauty all things strove:
The stars rain'd lustre in my eyes, that beam'd
With mild attemper'd light, and heavenly charms
In earthly mould were first to mortals shown:
Yet not alike on all this radiance flam'd;
His heart alone the glow celestial warms,
Who from another's bliss derives his own.'—
This sentence once 't was mine to trace,
Bright beaming from an angel's face,
But by too ardent passion fir'd
I nearly at the sight expir'd;
Nor for the deep and hopeless wound,
Sent from those eyes of heavenly blue—
By one whose power too well I knew,
Have I as yet a balsam found."

Since the publication of his tract on penal jurisprudence, in the year 1819, the attention of Mr. Roscoe had continued to be directed to the same important and interesting enquiries. The additional information which he had derived from America, so valuable in every respect, and the animadversions which had been made in some quarters upon his opinions, had induced him to

contemplate a second publication on the same subject; though, at the same time, the small share of public notice bestowed upon his former work almost discouraged him from making any further attempt. In this state of mind he addressed the following letter from Chat Moss to a friend who had always taken the greatest interest in these efforts to disseminate better principles of criminal jurisprudence:—

"I fear I shall be able to give you but an indifferent account of the progress of the work to which *you* have given rise, and in which you take so deep an interest; but the beauty of the season, the salubrity of the air, the pleasure of observing the operations of agriculture, and, above all, the delight of exercising one's limbs, after having been kept for some time within narrow bounds, have hitherto prevented me from accomplishing as much as I expected from the leisure of which this very retired situation admits. But this is not all. To say the truth, I have been in some degree disheartened by the unfavourable aspect of the times, and the idea of the *improbability*, not to say *absurdity*, of supposing that the statement of a few simple truisms, already expressed in a manner far beyond my power to equal, can produce any effect on the violence of party spirit, and the cold, uncharitable, and quarrelsome state of the public mind.

"Under these impressions, I yesterday took a

longer walk over the Moss than some of my friends would perhaps have approved; and had the satisfaction to observe some small plantations, of only a few years' growth, flourishing in great vigour in the native soil; a circumstance which led me to reflect, with some self-reproof, on my own negligence or mistake, in not having long ago planted this extensive waste in a similar manner, by which it would, at this time, have been highly valuable. On examining into the cause of this error, I found it had arisen from the conviction that the Moss soil *would not grow plants* of any value, being of too cold and intractable a nature; and, consequently, that the labour and expense of planting upon it would be thrown away. The evidence to the contrary now before my eyes served, however, to correct this mistake; and, as the proverb says, 'It is never too late to mend,' I should, probably, if now in my power, avail myself of my past omission.

"Leaving this, however, to events over which I have no control, I could not help applying the same reasoning to another subject, in which I am equally interested; and asking myself whether, in abandoning *our* projected publication, I was not falling into the same error of which I had before been guilty, and that too on a subject of infinitely greater importance. 'How do I know,' I said to myself, 'that sentiments and

feelings sincerely given to the public may be without their effect? Or why am I to take it for granted that good seed, if sown, will not vegetate; or just principles, if planted, will not flourish amongst mankind?' If at the present moment I feel the bitterness of regret in not having raised plantations in this wilderness, what sensations shall I feel if I should ever become conscious that I might have done some essential service to my fellow-creatures, and had neglected it under the idea that it was improbable, from their intractable dispositions, that it could produce any beneficial effect?

"Reflections of this kind once more recalled the determination with which I left you, and I now intend to proceed with my undertaking as expeditiously as my circumstances will permit."

"There are," says Mr. Roscoe, in his "Life of Pope," "certain periods in a person's life, as there are certain stations in the course of a traveller, when he thinks it proper to look back on the track he has passed, for the purpose of reviewing what he has accomplished, and of estimating whether the strength he has left be sufficient to finish what yet remains to be done." One of these periods had now arrived in the life of Mr. Roscoe, when, after a painful retrospect of the past, it became his duty to determine his course of life for the future.

While the affairs of the bank remained under his management, the only object he had in view was their final and satisfactory adjustment. He was, it is true, a partner in the new banking house, but the active direction of that concern was necessarily left to the other partners. He was now once more the master of his own time, and it became a matter of great consideration, in what manner his future life should be disposed of. Harassed and grieved as he had been at the failure of his plan for the payment of all the creditors in full, and worn down by the incessant labour and anxiety of superintending his affairs, he was strongly tempted to take this opportunity of retiring at once from all active pursuits, and of passing the remainder of his life in the seclusion of Chat Moss. But the reflection that, even at his advanced period of life, his personal exertions might still be rendered available in the service of his family, and of the public, induced him to abandon the idea of retirement, and to return once more to the active duties of life. In the following letter he has disclosed very fully the motives which influenced him to adopt this resolution: — "The question, which ever since the unfortunate result of our bank concerns has occupied my thoughts by night and by day, has been whether it is incumbent on me, in duty to my family, my friends, my character, and my peace of mind, to continue (if practicable) in

public life, or to withdraw myself into a retired situation.

" This question I have placed in every point of view of which it is capable; but the fact is, the decision was prematurely sought for, and could not be made until many previous results, of which the great event before alluded to is a principal one, were first ascertained.

" Without troubling you with the reasons on each side, I can now say, that unless I meet with some unfavourable circumstances, of which I am not at present aware, I mean to devote myself to the former, and if I receive encouragement, to resume an active course of life; and in saying this I have the satisfaction of thinking I shall meet the wishes of all those who are nearest and dearest to me. I dare not, however, venture to acknowledge how much this sacrifice costs me. It seems to me the final relinquishment and extinction of all the hopes and prospects of my youth — the abandonment of that state of leisure and retirement, for the enjoyment of which, at its proper period, I had endeavoured to make the best preparation which a busy life had afforded me.

" I will not, however, deny that these feelings, severe as they may be, are counterbalanced by others of an opposite tendency, and that the flattering hope that I may yet be able to render my humble efforts at utility serviceable to those

to whom I am so greatly indebted, — that I may experience the benefits of those public institutions to the establishment of which I have in some degree contributed, and above all, that I may enjoy the friendship and society of those to whom I am bound, more by the ties of affection than even by those of gratitude, — has reconciled me to a result which I should once have thought it would have been impossible for me to sustain.

" The struggle is now over; and I shall willingly persuade myself, that even in the most selfish point of view it is for my own happiness — that a state of retirement would not have satisfied the cravings of a restless mind, and that in the active performance of that, which I cannot but feel to be my duty, I shall find my best reward.

" This determination being once made, brings with it many consequences of considerable importance in the arrangement of my concerns, and clears the way as to my future conduct. Involved as I have been, rather by unsought-for inducements, than by premeditated intention, in several extensive undertakings, I have at least derived from them a conviction of the impolicy of being led into engagements of this nature, in which I have been accountable for the errors of others as well as my own. Since I came to this place, it is true, I have found reason to form

a still more favourable opinion of my agricultural improvements than I before entertained, and have little doubt but that, by proper measures, this great undertaking may be rendered productive of considerable benefit. But this no longer rests with me. If I am again destined to my station in the centre of a busy town, I cannot but see that these objects are become incompatible. The public judge, and can only judge, by the result; and I can only expect the public confidence, by cutting off every engagement and employment which can be supposed to interfere with my more important pursuits. I have, therefore, abandoned all thoughts of taking up my habitation here; and, if I see this place in future, it will only be as a visiter to my son James, in case he and his family should be established here under some arrangement for that purpose; which may perhaps be the case; as I think it scarcely to be expected that any other person will, in these times, be found to undertake so laborious a task. Other concerns I have none; and in the circle of my own family, the society of my friends, and such resources as I may be able to find in the contracted limits of my literary pursuits, I shall look forward, with humble confidence, to the enjoyment of as much happiness as it is usual for human life to obtain."

During the long and tedious inquiry which

took place in the court of Chancery respecting the allowance of his certificate, Mr. Roscoe received the able and gratuitous services of his friends Mr. Basil Montagu and Mr. William Lowndes, formerly his ward; and at length, after a delay of some months, the proceedings terminated in a decision favourable to the wishes of Mr. Roscoe, and his certificate being allowed, he was enabled to return to the society of his family and friends at Liverpool. Though he had resolved, as appears from the letter already given, once more to engage actively in business, yet the state of his health, and more especially the numerous literary undertakings in which he soon engaged, induced him to change this resolution, and to prefer the moderate but secure remuneration which his pen afforded him, to the more ample but uncertain emoluments of a banking concern. He, therefore, in the autumn of the present year, withdrew his name from the firm, and never afterwards took any part in business.

It was at this period that, unknown to himself, several of his friends united together for the purpose of raising a sum of money for his use. This object was accomplished with ease, and the sum of 2500*l.* was contributed, and vested in trustees for the benefit of himself and his family. The office of communicating to him this kind and liberal act, on the part of his friends, was confided to Dr. Traill, who by his judicious repre-

sentations, and affectionate remonstrances, succeeded in removing from the mind of Mr. Roscoe the objections which he felt to incur obligations of so serious a nature.

After the great anxieties which he had lately suffered, a change of scene seemed particularly desirable for him; and he was induced, at the solicitation of his friends, to pay another visit to Holkham, where not only were his spirits relieved by enjoying the society of Mr. Coke, but his thoughts were agreeably occupied in the task which he had undertaken of making a catalogue of the manuscript library. It required, however, no inconsiderable effort to tear himself away so soon from the tranquil comforts of his home, and from the society of those attached friends to whom he had been so lately restored. To one of these he thus wrote, soon after his arrival at Holkham: —

"I cannot suffer our honest bookbinder, Jones, to return from this place to Liverpool without a line to assure you, my ever dear friend, that I have done, and am doing, all in my power to carry into effect the advice so kindly given me on all hands on my departure from home, to banish from my mind all that I left behind me, and to attend only to my own pursuits and amusements. In this attempt I have great assistance not only from the place itself, but from the society around me, some of the

best the kingdom affords, so that I begin to hope I may in time be able to wean myself from what I have left, and to enjoy the present without its being imbittered by the past. I cannot, however, say that I have as yet perfectly succeeded in my attempt, or that the thoughts of friends and home do not sometimes intrude themselves upon me; but these I repel with tolerable success by reflecting that it was high time for me to relieve them from the painful task of hearing complaints of past misfortunes, and to retire to a situation where I must necessarily bear the weight of my own anxieties. That I have made this effort, and still more that I have in some degree succeeded in it, is a matter of some satisfaction to me; and whilst I assume a cheerful countenance, and endeavour to add as much as is in my power to the general amusement, I feel a kind of pride in thinking that no one is rendered unhappy by any thing that passes within my own breast. This self-complaisance, however, is not of any long duration, and I soon begin to perceive that in thus disciplining myself to carry my own burden, I do no more than perform a duty to society, which is, perhaps, performed by every individual around me, and by some in a much greater degree than by myself."

Some account of his occupations at Holkham is given in the following extract from a letter to the same friend: —

" Since my arrival here I have applied myself with the greatest assiduity, as far as my health would admit, to the task I have undertaken, than which few more laborious of the kind have ever been attempted; and I have now the pleasure to inform you that I expect, in the course of a few weeks, to be able so to arrange my materials as to enable me, on my return, to draw up such a catalogue as will not discredit the collection. Lady Anson, who draws most beautifully, has undertaken to copy some of the very curious specimens of designs in gold and colours in the ancient MSS. I do not believe an artist could be found in the kingdom, who could execute them with greater accuracy.

" The Duke of Gloucester is to be here on the 9th of next month, and as he has been so good as to express a wish to meet me here, I shall not be able to leave Holkham till about the middle of the month, after which I must pass a few days at Norwich, Cambridge, and Althorp, before my return, and probably I may go to London, respecting which I cannot yet determine."

During his residence at Chat Moss, in the spring and summer of the present year, Mr. Roscoe had made some progress in preparing for the press his " Illustrations of the Life of Lorenzo de' Medici," a volume intended as a reply to the criticisms of M. de Sismondi and other writers upon his work, and which had, at

intervals, occupied much of his attention for some years. He had also engaged to write a short account of a very extraordinary person, who, in a low rank of life, and in circumstances of the utmost indigence, had acquired an almost perfect knowledge of a variety of languages. For the benefit of this singular man, who had been long known to Mr. Roscoe, and for some time supported by his bounty, this narrative of his history had been planned.

In addition to these labours, Mr. Roscoe had been requested by the booksellers of London to superintend an edition of Pope's works, and to add to it fresh notes and a new Life of the poet.

With the view of forwarding these various literary undertakings, Mr. Roscoe paid a visit to London in the autumn of the present year (1820). In a letter to Mrs. Roscoe, informing her of his arrival, he says,—"It was with real pain and vexation I passed Linley Wood without calling. After leaving Will there, I had a very stupid journey, with a great lumbering Flamand from Brussels, whom he will remember putting into the coach, who could not speak a word of English, and with whom I was obliged to converse in bad French, and to translate for him, in case of necessity, as our friend the parson did for the Irishman, who had missed his way, and got into France. At best, a drive of 200

miles, in one of these coaches, is a horrible job, which I hope I shall not often have to repeat. I have as yet seen no one but Charles Aikin and John M'Creery, the former of whom gives me a good account of all the family, except the poor Doctor, who, I fear, is too unwell for me to get a sight of. The latter dined with us, and we had much conversation about our numerous undertakings, which I hope will go on well. I have quite recovered from the effects of my journey, and am about to set to work under the impression of having a good deal of time to myself, which is indispensable to my completing my task."

The progress of his various labours he describes in the following extract from a letter to Mrs. Rathbone:—

"May I hope, my ever dear friend, that I shall not be thought intrusive in giving you a few lines to inform you that I am settled here as comfortably as the general state of my health, and the absence from those enjoyments which lately constituted so great a part of the happiness of my life, will allow. Almost my whole time is closely devoted to study, and I am already engaged in printing the 'Memoir of Richard Roberts,' and my 'Illustrations of the Life of Lorenzo,' both of which I hope to complete before I leave town for Norfolk. I am going this evening to dine with my bookseller, Mr. Cadell,

where I shall meet some of the other proprietors of Pope's works, and shall hear what is expected from me as to time, of which I must endeavour to obtain, if possible, a little extension. * * * For my own part, notwithstanding the kind accommodation I here meet with, I cannot help considering it as a kind of exile, and already begin to look forwards to the time when I may again find myself enjoying the delicious air of Greenbank, with a mind, if not wholly free from anxiety (for that never has been, nor ever will be my lot), yet with less laborious undertakings than I have on my hands at present."

As his chief object in this visit was to superintend the printing of the two works which he was about to publish, he made few engagements, though he occasionally enjoyed the society of some of his friends. "I dined with Dr. Parr," he says, in a letter to Mrs. Roscoe, "at William Lowndes's on Thursday, and again at Mr. Newnham Collingwood's (who married the eldest daughter of Lord Collingwood) on Friday. To morrow I am engaged to dine with Fuseli; and on Thursday next with Mr. Cadell, which are all my engagements at present, having cautiously kept out of the way of them. Hitherto I have not made any great progress in my undertakings, although I have devoted to them all the time in my power, reserving a little for exercise. Yesterday Robert and I paid a visit to old Palace Yard,

and saw the great alterations made in the neighbourhood; visited the House of Lords and Commons, &c., and afterwards the Prince Regent's new street, opposite Carlton House, a collection of plaistered buildings, better calculated for show than duration." In another letter he says, "The days pass with such rapidity, in consequence of my being so fully employed, that I can scarcely believe I have already made so long a stay here. But I shall have thrown a great weight off my mind in printing Lorenzo and Dick Roberts, and shall be enabled to begin with Pope soon, and continue without interruption. The plan I have adopted, however painful it was to me in many respects, is the only one that could have got me clear of the laborious tasks I have undertaken."

At the end of November, Mr. Roscoe had proceeded so far with the printing of his new works as to be enabled to leave town for Holkham, where he was anxious to complete the task he had undertaken of preparing a catalogue of the magnificent library of manuscripts belonging to Mr. Coke.

Of his progress in this laborious but interesting work he gives some account in the following letter to Mr. M'Creery:—

"I have long intended to address a few lines to you from this place, but was desirous of being able to give you some information as to my views, and the nature of the task I have undertaken.

I have now been here nearly three months, closely employed in making a descriptive catalogue of the manuscript library; but, notwithstanding my utmost exertions, I have not yet been able to bring it to a termination, and it will take some weeks still to complete it. When it is done it will be the greatest exertion that I, or perhaps any other person, ever made in the time; the difficulties being much beyond what I had calculated on, and the assistance of books from the printed library being much less than I had expected. I have, however, been repaid in a great degree for my trouble by the pleasure I have had in the investigation and explanation of these ancient records, which are much more curious and valuable than I had supposed; and I shall surprise the learned world by some very interesting information. I have already accumulated as much as will make a good quarto volume, which it is Mr. Coke's intention to have printed; and I hope to be able so to arrange the correcting it, as to have it pass through your press. The work will be accompanied by numerous engravings and ornaments, for which Lady Anson is making drawings, and I am promised such other assistance as will render it a splendid production. I will not, however, enlarge upon it at present, as I am in hopes in a short time to see you in London, when we can talk over this subject much

better than we can discuss it by letter, and when we will lay a plan for carrying this object into effect.

"I am sure I need not tell you, that I find Mr. Coke the same firm and upright friend of liberty and reform as when I was here last. Uninfluenced by any party, his only wish is to do justice to all, and to give to every one those rights which he enjoys himself. The pleasure I have had in his society, and in that of his family, has alleviated my daily labours, and enabled me to accomplish what I certainly should not have undertaken had I been aware of its extent and difficulty; but before I see you, I hope to have finished my first sketch of a catalogue, though it will take some time to reduce it into order."

In a letter to one of his daughters, dated 11th January, 1821, he says, "Accept my best thanks, my dear Jenny, for your last letter; and be assured that nothing can afford me greater pleasure than to hear of the health and happiness of you all, particularly of your mother, whose state of health naturally renders me anxious to hear either *from* her or *of* her as frequently as possible. As to myself, I go on precisely in the same way as I have done for some months past, devoting every moment of my time to the task I have undertaken, and only taking as much time to myself as is absolutely requisite for exercise,

food, and sleep. By this perseverance I have now made a great progress in my undertaking, and have some hopes that, in the course of next week, I shall be able to bring the catalogue as near a conclusion as I can with the materials I have here; but much will still remain to be done after my return."

During this visit, the birth-day of Lady Anson, who had honoured Mr. Roscoe with her confidence and friendship, was celebrated by him in the following lines: —

"TO THE VISCOUNTESS DOWAGER ANSON,

Celebrating her Birthday at Holkham, Jan. 23. 1831.

"When Anson's natal day returns,
And Holkham's halls resound with joy,
And every youthful bosom burns
To share the general ecstasy,
Say, shall the voice of friendship dare
Awhile thy favouring ear detain,
And mingle with the festive cheer
A fainter note, a temper'd strain?

"Yes; for whilst mirth and music swell,
The heart will ask a pause of bliss,
Nor on the rapturous moment dwell
With unrestrain'd confidingness:
Then — in that interval of peace
A deeper feeling it will own,
Nor may, perchance, the chord displease,
That vibrates to a softer tone.

" Yet think not that the song severe
Would check the tabor's sprightly sound,
Or bid the cheerful train forbear
The lively dance, the sportive round;
Hard were the heart and dull the soul,
That would the festive scene forego,
And drop in pleasure's mantling bowl
The tear of retrospective woe.

" Then turn, and with a parent's joy
Survey the gaily circling band,
And meet the glance that from the eye
Bids all the filial soul expand;
And think that thro' a wider sphere
Thy being's energies extend,
And every tender feeling share
Of daughter, sister, mother, friend.

" But while thou glad'st the social feast,
By all around admir'd, approv'd,
By every charm of nature grac'd,
In blessing blest, in loving lov'd;
And while thy vows in secret prayer,
By all around unseen, unknown,
The breathings of thy spirit bear,
In incense to th' eternal throne:

" O not for this — that favouring Heaven
Thro' flowery paths thy youth has led,
Thy home in splendid bowers has given,
And pour'd its blessings on thine head;
For many a breast as free from pain
As thine has felt the duteous glow,
Nor could thy grateful heart restrain
Its warm spontaneous overflow.

" But deeper benefits than these
Thy deeper gratitude demand,
For He who all thy goodness sees,
Has touch'd thee with his weighty hand;
And thou, with heart resign'd and pure,
Hast bow'd submissive to the stroke,
And taught thy spirit to endure
His strong control, his powerful yoke.

" O painful trials! only sent
To those his searching eye approves,
O soul-afflicting chastisement!
Unknown to all but those he loves;
Who from the lowest depths of woe
To higher excellence aspire,
As gold that takes a brighter glow,
When tried amidst the purging fire.

" Hence, not in grandeur, pomp, and state,
Those idols of the vulgar mind,
That charm the little and the great,
Canst thou thy genuine pleasures find;
'Tis when that chasten'd cheerfulness
Thy presence gives to all around,
Returns again thyself to bless,
Thy heart enjoys the sweet rebound.

" And dearer far to thee the joy
Beside the bed of pain to stand,
And see thy friend, with grateful eye,
Drink health and gladness from thine hand,
Than if, ordain'd in courts to shine,
Thy steps the midnight revel led,
And every gem from India's mine
Blaz'd radiant on thine high plum'd head!

"For know, amidst this world of strife,
By Heaven's immutable decree,
The only draught that sweetens life
Is mixt with human sympathy;
And they who to a selfish sphere
The general bounty would confine,
Those high delights must never share
That only visit hearts like thine."

Yet, even amidst the pleasures of Holkham, Mr. Roscoe looked forward with anxiety to the time when he should be restored to that tranquil domestic society, to which, as the infirmities of age increased upon him, he felt doubly attached. "As I find," he says, in a letter to Mrs. Rathbone, "that you have been so good as to call sometimes at the Mount, you will perhaps have heard how closely I have been employed in getting through the tasks which compelled me to the painful measure I have taken, and which, I assure you, have proved quite as formidable as I had supposed. I find, however, a still greater difficulty in keeping down my own restless and impatient temper, which I endeavour to do, at some times by reasoning with myself on the folly of rebelling against my fate, and at others by promising myself, that when these heavy undertakings are accomplished, I may enjoy some degree of leisure and tranquillity, and may, perhaps, once more wander through the delightful gardens of Greenbank, without the cares and

anxiety which have hitherto intruded themselves on my steps.

"I have now been here upwards of a week, and am sorry to say that my progress is so small that I can form no conjecture as to the time my undertaking will occupy, and begin to fear that another journey will be necessary before it can be accomplished."

Early in the year 1821 Mr. Roscoe returned to his residence at Liverpool, and resumed with much ardour his literary occupations. Soon after his arrival at home he received a communication from Mr. A. J. Valpy, informing him of his intention to publish a series of Italian authors, in about thirty or thirty-five volumes, and requesting to know whether it would be convenient to him to assume the conduct of the work, so far as related to the selections of the authors, or parts of authors, to be printed. In reply to this communication, Mr. Roscoe, after adverting to the conditions of his engaging in the undertaking, thus proceeds:—

"With the selections that have already been made of the Italian writers I am pretty well acquainted, but know of none that answers the idea of what I conceive such a collection should be. The sketch you have sent me is not less remote from the plan I should be inclined to propose. It is time the world should be made better acquainted with the Italian writers, and par-

ticularly with their poets, many of whom yet remain almost unknown to us. A similar observation may perhaps be made on their prose writers, whose works may be said to contain a rich mine of instruction and amusement which has scarcely yet been opened."

In the following letter to Sir James Smith he adverts to this undertaking:— "You will probably have seen, by the public papers, that I have undertaken to give my assistance to Mr. Valpy, in publishing a collection of the Italian poets, in forty-eight volumes, in which it is intended that the works of each author should be introduced by biographical and critical dissertations, extracted from the best literary historians and critics of Italy; a mode which I proposed. You will, perhaps, be more surprised to hear that I have also acceded to a proposal made to me to write a new life of Pope, and publish a new edition of his works; an undertaking of much more labour than the other, and at the present time, in which a sharp contest is carrying on, both as to his moral and poetical character, attended with some peculiar difficulties. From a pretty close examination of the larger editions of his works, I am not, however, greatly discouraged; nor can I help thinking that, however deficient I may be found in some respects, I shall be able to give an edition more just to the character of the author, and more accommodated to the use

of the general reader than any of those that have been published since the time of Warburton."

Unfortunately, for want of proper encouragement, Mr. Valpy's scheme languished and died.

Soon after Mr. Roscoe's return to Liverpool, the "Illustrations, historical and critical, of the Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, called the Magnificent," issued from the press. The object of this work is thus stated by its author, in his prefatory observations:—

"Upwards of twenty-five years have elapsed since the publication of the 'Life of Lorenzo de' Medici.' During that time considerable additions have been made to the political and literary history of Italy; many original and valuable documents have been produced, and the labours of several distinguished writers, as well here as abroad, have given a greater interest to the subject.

"Under these circumstances the history of the life of Lorenzo has occasionally been the object of reference and of criticism; and whilst the merits and talents of that distinguished individual have on the one hand been more fully illustrated, attempts have been made on the other to depreciate his character, and doubts have been thrown out as to his being entitled to the high rank which he has so long held in the general estimation. To collect and to place under one point of view the information which

has thus been acquired; to give some account of the various writers by whom it has been furnished; to demonstrate that Lorenzo de' Medici has a just claim to the elevated station which he has so long maintained, and to vindicate the fidelity and accuracy of his English biographer, against the censures of some foreign writers, the effects of which have extended to this country, are the chief motives which have induced him to submit this additional volume to the indulgence of the public."

Amongst the foreign writers to whom Mr. Roscoe here refers, the principal was the learned and celebrated M. de Sismondi, who, in his "Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du moyen Age," has attempted to show that the character of Lorenzo de' Medici, drawn by his English biographer, is partial and incorrect; that, in his political conduct, he was guilty of oppression towards his countrymen, and that, so far from meriting the high eulogiums that had been pronounced upon him, he was not even to be considered as possessing superior merits in poetry, in philosophy, or in art. The other writers, whose criticisms, chiefly relating to the literary merits of Lorenzo de' Medici, are noticed and replied to in the Illustrations, are Lorenzo Pignotti, in his "Storia della Toscana;" Professor Pozzetti, in his "Due dissertazioni sopra alcuni passi della vita di Lorenzo de' Medici, scritta

dal Dottore Guglielmo Roscoe;" and the celebrated Abate Andres, in a manuscript critique, forwarded to Mr. Roscoe from Italy.* The opinions and remarks of these writers are canvassed at considerable length in the Illustrations, and controverted, not only by the author's own observations, but by the judgment and authority of many of the great scholars of Italy, whose sentiments coincide with his own. With what success this defence of his work is executed, those who are conversant with the early literary history of Italy will judge.

"In laying before the public," he says, at the conclusion of his prefatory observations, "such additional proofs and documents as the kindness of my friends, or my own researches, have placed within my power, for vindicating the representations which I have already given to the public of the life and character of Lorenzo de' Medici, I trust it will not be understood, that I conceive that the work to which they relate stands in need of any other evidence, to satisfy any impartial and candid mind, than such as it bears within itself, and is confirmed by the very numerous authorities to which I have there diligently referred. From these it will sufficiently appear, that the man, whose character I have attempted to illustrate, was not only distinguished above

* Vide ante, vol. i.

the rest of his countrymen, but, when considered with respect to the variety and extent of his talents, was one of the most extraordinary persons that any age or country has produced—that to whatever subject he applied himself, he displayed that superiority and originality which *genius* alone can give—that in his intimate acquaintance with the philosophy of the times, in the variety of his poetical compositions, in the acknowledged refinement of his taste, and his encouragement of the fine arts, he has few equals in any of these departments, and in the union of them all was certainly never excelled. But a much higher praise awaits him. Whatever efforts may have been made to deprive him of honours so justly his due, it was he who was the first person in modern times to oppose to the lawless violence and outrage of war the voice of reason, and the dictates of justice and common sense; to perceive the political relations of the different states of Christendom, and to balance and reconcile their various interests so as to produce the general tranquillity; and to set an example, which, if it had been successfully followed, might have prevented ages of contention and bloodshed, and enabled us to date from the commencement of the sixteenth century the great career of human improvement. But although I feel confident that these will be the convictions of every impartial reader of his short

but active life, I have not thought it advisable to suffer his memory to rest without a further vindication. Having, through a sincere and disinterested admiration, endeavoured to raise a monument worthy of his fame, I cannot remain in silent indifference, and suffer it to be defaced by the hands of prejudice and malice, or insulted by the attacks of ignorance and spleen: I have, therefore, endeavoured to secure it by an additional defence, which may keep at a distance the rude feet that would trample on his ashes, and may secure my own labours against similar attacks."

The nature of this publication, consisting of a series of detached criticisms, not connected by any continued narrative, was not such as to render it generally popular. It must, however, always be regarded as an indispensable appendage to the "Life of Lorenzo de' Medici," and as conferring no inconsiderable additional value upon that work.

Mr. Roscoe having transmitted a copy of the "Illustrations" to his learned correspondent, the Canonico Moreni of Florence, it was by that accomplished scholar placed in the hands of one of his friends, Signor V. Pecchioli, by whom a version of it into Italian was published at Florence in the year 1823, with the omission of the Appendix. On receiving a copy of this translation, Mr. Roscoe addressed the following letter to Signor Pecchioli:—

"I am extremely sorry that my numerous concerns and journeys from home, and particularly my having undertaken to furnish the London booksellers with a new edition of the works of Pope, to be accompanied by an original life of him on an extended scale, has so long prevented me from perusing and examining, with the attention which was necessary, your translation of my 'Illustrations of the Life of Lorenzo de' Medici,' with a copy of which you some time since honoured me, and of which I have within these few days received a duplicate, accompanying your obliging letter of the 27th April. Having now just completed my very laborious engagement, and relieved myself from the importunity of the booksellers, I have devoted some days to the perusal and examination of your work; and am, upon the whole, much pleased with the easy, natural, and unassuming style in which it is executed, and with the impartiality and reserve so properly adhered to in the expression of your own opinion on the various subjects of controversy to which it relates. At the same time, I regret to say, that I have met with some passages which appear to me to be either not fully understood or not correctly expressed, and which it will therefore be necessary to alter, in case of another edition. Of these I have made out a list, as far as the prefatory observations extend, and, if you desire it, will

continue the same through the volume. You will, I doubt not, receive these remarks in that candid spirit which you have already so fully manifested, and will perceive that I should not have been at the trouble of making them had I not thought the work deserving of it. With the short article in the 11th number of the '*Nuovo Giornale de' Letterati*,' I think we have neither of us any great reason to be dissatisfied.

"For the information in your last, on the state of literature and literary publications in Italy, which I am sorry to find is not so favourable as might be wished, accept my best thanks. With respect to the intended publication of a new edition of the Cav. Mecherini's translation of the 'Life of Lorenzo,' it does not at present occur to me that I have any alterations or remarks to suggest, further than such as are contained in the Illustrations already published. I have, however, undertaken to examine this work in the original English, and also the 'Life of Leo X.,' preparatory to new editions of them, which are immediately going to the press, having been long out of print; and if I should discover any thing of sufficient importance to deserve your notice, will lose no time in communicating it to you.

"I wish it were in my power to answer your inquiries respecting the prospect which a master in the Italian language would have of a favour-

able establishment in Liverpool, in a manner more accordant with the views of your friend. The truth is, that the present state of Italy has induced a great number of individuals, some of them of high rank and undoubted talents, to resort to this country, where their principal occupation is to teach their native tongue, for which they are many of them highly qualified. One of this number, a celebrated advocate, has established himself in Liverpool, and has upon the whole been well received; but the consequence has been, that another person, who taught before with great success, has quitted the town, nor is it probable that any other would succeed, as long as the gentleman now in possession of the field remains here."

A copy of the "Illustrations" was forwarded to M. de Sismondi, who acknowledged the receipt of it in the following letter:—

"Monsieur,

"Je reçus, il y a quelque tems, de votre part, les '*Illustrations of the Life of Lorenzo de' Medici.*' J'en éprouvai quelque étonnement, mais j'en fus flatté en même temps, et je vous en remercie. Vous paroissiez me dire ainsi que vous sentiez que j'aimois assez la vérité pour qu'elle me plût même dans une réfutation.

"Mais est-ce bien la vérité? Vous verrez, Monsieur, par la petite feuille ci-jointe, que je

persiste dans mon opinion. Je n'ai point voulu répondre ni dans un journal ni par un opuscule séparé aux reproches que vous me faites; le public dans de telles querelles ne s'intéresse que contre les deux antagonistes à la fois. Toutefois, donnant aujourd'hui une nouvelle édition de mon onzième volume, il m'a paru que je vous devois à vous-même d'expliquer pourquoi je m'étois affermi dans mes sentimens; je l'ai fait briévement, et j'ai fait imprimer à part ces notes pour ceux seulement qui ont ma première édition. J'ai répondu sur presque tous les points. Il en est un grave cependant que je ne pourrois aujourd'hui traiter sans danger. Il s'agit des conspirations, et bien autant de celle contre Visconti que de celle contre Medici. Je ne discuterai point avec vous, Monsieur, les opinions que j'ai énoncées à leur égard. Je fais des vœux bien sincères pour que vous ne voyiez jamais votre patrie dans une condition telle qu'elle vous fit changer d'avis; et je crois en effet la liberté de l'Angleterre assez assurée pour qu'elle n'ait plus jamais à recourir *à cette dernière raison du peuple.*

" Agréez, Monsieur, l'expression de la haute considération avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être,

" Votre tr. h. ob. S^r^.

" De Sismondi.

" Genève, 2 Juillet, 1824."

To this letter Mr. Roscoe immediately sent the following reply:—

"I had the honour of receiving, a few days since, your letter of the 2d July last, and am happy to find that the differences of opinion which subsist between us on some particular points, have not prevented those favourable sentiments of general respect which ought to subsist between those whose only object is the investigation of truth. At the same time, I cannot but regret that the efforts I have made in my 'Illustrations of the Life of Lorenzo de' Medici,' to remove the opinions you entertain of his character, have failed of their effect; and this regret is increased by the reflection that this work was purposely intended to conciliate your favourable opinion, and to attract your powerful support to what I consider as the cause of truth. If, on any occasion, I have exceeded the limits of literary courtesy and respect, you will, I trust, do me the justice to attribute it to my earnestness to accomplish this purpose, and not to any feelings of an adverse nature towards one whose productions I so highly admire, and in whose sentiments, on almost all the great questions of human interest, I so fully concur. You will also, I hope, believe that, in making this effort, I was not influenced by any degree of literary competition, to which I know myself too well to pretend, or even by the defence of

my personal credit as a biographer, although that might, perhaps, have some weight with me; but, by an idea of the importance of vindicating an exalted character, in order to show that there is in fact something really good and estimable in human nature, and by a strong conviction of the injurious effects of reducing all men to one common level, and of imputing such blots and errors to the highest characters as wholly destroy their example, and lead us to doubt the very existence of virtue.

"With respect to your notes, intended for the new edition of your history, and of which you have done me the honour to transmit me a copy, I have only to observe, that they appear to me to have carried our debate to a sufficient length, and that I shall willingly leave it to the public to decide between us without a further reply. If I should deviate from this course, it will, I think, extend only to your last note, in which you have again endeavoured to show that Lorenzo de' Medici maintained an usurped authority by bloody executions. * * * * * I might also, perhaps, complain of the conclusion of this note, where you declare you know not whether I have had blood enough to satisfy me; but I consider this as intended merely to give effect to the preceding representations; it being impossible you could either think that I thirsted for

blood, or expect that any of your readers could think so.

" In turning to more agreeable subjects, it is with great pleasure I can assure you that your excellent work on the Literature of the South of Europe, which has been translated into English by one of my sons, and lately published, has been very favourably received, and that a new edition is shortly expected."

Some time after this correspondence, Mr. Roscoe had the pleasure of becoming personally acquainted with M. de Sismondi, who, during a visit to England, passed a few days at the house of Mr. W. S. Roscoe, near Liverpool. The intelligent conversation and the courteous and friendly manners of this distinguished foreigner attracted the warm regard of Mr. Roscoe; and no one who witnessed the mutual pleasure they found in one another's society, would have recognised the meeting of two literary controversialists.

Nearly at the same time with the Illustrations of the Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, the little memoir of the extraordinary person already referred to appeared, under the title of a " Memoir of Richard Roberts Jones, of Aberdaron, in the county of Carnarvon, in North Wales, exhibiting a remarkable instance of a partial power and cultivation of intellect." This most singular person, who is still living, and who con-

tinues to display a love of learning and an extent of erudition seldom exhibited within the walls of schools or universities, united with a want of common sense amounting almost to idiocy, and a squalor and wretchedness of appearance of which a common mendicant would be ashamed, was first introduced to the notice of Mr. Roscoe in the early part of the year 1806. The impression which his extraordinary appearance and acquirements made upon Mr. Roscoe at this time is described in the following letter to Dr. Parr, who had unfortunately left Allerton just before the appearance there of the Welsh scholar: —

"Your letter found me in conversation with one of the most extraordinary beings that ever occurred to my notice — a poor Welsh fisher-lad, as ragged as a colt, and as uncouth as any being that has a semblance of humanity. But beneath such an exterior is a mind cultivated not only beyond all reasonable expectation, but beyond all probable conception. In his fishing boat on the coast of Wales, at an age little more than twenty, he has acquired the Greek, the Hebrew, and the Latin languages, has read the Iliad, Hesiod, Theocritus, &c. studied the refinements of Greek pronunciation, and examined the connection of that language with the Hebrew. He reads Latin with the utmost facility, and translates it either into Welsh or English. I

asked him whether he knew Italian? Yes, he could read it. I spoke to him in French, — he answered me, and we carried on our conversation in that language.

" He is well disposed, modest, truly pious, and intelligent, but in his exterior motions is certainly like no other creature on earth. He has just entered the room with a wallet of books in all languages, and on my speaking to him, he saluted me with a sort of curtsey, instead of a bow. Yet, the expression of his features speaks his mind; and if shaved and docked, he might not perhaps appear so frightful as at present. He has now left his country, where he says he is persecuted, and thrown himself upon our benevolence, of which he thinks he had some proof, on one of his visits here with fish. What I shall do with him, I know not; but I have promised him help and protection, which he shall have; and if I find I can assist in rendering the very extraordinary talents with which God has been pleased to endow this humble child of indigence useful to himself or others, I shall have no small pleasure in doing it. If, on further experience, I find him as deserving as he seems to be at present, I shall most probably take advantage of your friendship, and intrude upon you for your advice respecting him. At present, I assure you, I think it one of the most extraordinary circumstances that ever fell in my way; but as first

impressions are often incorrect, and I have yet seen but little of him, I will trouble you no longer respecting him at present, than to request your kind permission to mention him to you again should I find him entitled to your advice and favour."

This extraordinary being was immediately taken by Mr. Roscoe under his protection. His rags were replaced by decent clothing, and a comfortable bed was prepared for him at night. So little, however, was he accustomed to the usages of civilised life, that, instead of getting into the bed, he crept under it. Such, also, was his attachment to the squalid habits in which he had lived, that it was with the utmost difficulty he could be persuaded to submit to those ablutions which were absolutely necessary to render a near conversation with him agreeable or, indeed, safe. One of Mr. Roscoe's first objects was to provide him with some employment to which he had been accustomed, and upon enquiry, it appeared that he had been brought up to the occupation of a *sawyer*. The sequel is thus told in the memoir.

"A recommendation was given him to a person who employed many hands in sawing, and Richard was put down in the sawpit. He accordingly commenced his labours, and proceeded for some time with a fair prospect of success. It was not long, however, before his efforts re-

laxed, and grew fainter and fainter, till at length he fell on his face, and lay extended at the bottom of the pit, calling out loudly for help. On raising him up, and inquiring into the cause of his disaster, it appeared that he had laboured to the full extent of his arms' length, when, not being aware that it was necessary he should also move forwards his feet, and being quite breathless and exhausted, he was found in the situation described. As soon as he had recovered himself, he returned to the person who sent him, and complained loudly of the treatment he had received, and of his being put under ground. On being asked, why he had represented himself as *a sawyer*, he replied that he had never been employed in any other branch of sawing than *cross-cutting* the branches of timber trees when fallen in the woods in Wales."

Other attempts were made to discover a suitable employment for Richard, but in vain. He was placed in the office of a printer in Liverpool, where it was supposed his complete knowledge of the dead languages might render his services useful; but his inaptitude for business, and his inattention to the common decencies of personal cleanliness, soon terminated the engagement. At Allerton, many persons of distinguished learning had an opportunity of witnessing the extraordinary attainments of Richard Roberts, who never failed to leave a deep impression of the

singular powers of his intellect upon their minds. It was during the visit of Mr. Coke and Dr. Parr at Allerton, in the year 1815, that the following incident, related in the memoir, occurred :—

"One of his friends happened to have a party to dinner, several of whom were persons of considerable literary distinction ; when, by the misunderstanding of a message * after dinner, the door opened ; and, to the equal surprise of both the host and his guests, Richard entered the room, his whole dress and appearance being grotesque in the highest degree. The curiosity of the company was excited ; and, after the mistake to which his introduction was owing had been explained, he was asked several questions in French, to which he gave ready and correct answers. The conversation was then changed to Italian, in which he acquitted himself with equal readiness. To this succeeded an inquiry into his knowledge of Latin and Greek, in which languages he read and translated some passages to the satisfaction of the persons present. One of the party then proceeded to examine him

* The mistake which Mr. Roscoe alludes to was this. Having been conversing with the friends around him on the subject of the instinct of animals, he mentioned to them the singular habits of a Brazilian weasel (the *Coati Mondi*), which had been presented to him. One of his sons, sitting at the other end of the table, was desired "to bring in *the beast;*" but, unluckily, not having heard the previous conversation, he conducted Richard Roberts into the dining-room.

more particularly, when the following dialogue occurred:—

"Q. As you seem to have made no little proficiency in languages, pray tell me what means you take in acquiring a language?

"A. It is according to what the nature of the language is.

"Q. How would you set about acquiring a modern language?

"A. If it was Spanish, for instance, I would take a vocabulary of the language, and examine what words corresponded with, or resembled the words in any other language with which I was acquainted; as, for instance, the Latin, French, or Italian; and those words I would strike out of the vocabulary, learning only such as were the original or peculiar words of the Spanish tongue; and then, by the assistance of a grammar, I should soon be able to attain a knowledge of that language.

"All the party admitted, that this was a most judicious and excellent method; and Richard withdrew, with expressions of approbation from all present."

It was on a previous day, during the same visit, that Richard had an interview with Dr. Parr, who immediately plunged into the darkest recesses of ancient learning. The refinements of the Greek language, and the works of the critics who had illustrated it were entered into,

and gradually the conversation changed to the Hebrew, its peculiar construction and its analogous tongues. Here Richard had evidently the advantage; and after an attempted inroad into the Chaldee, the Doctor rather precipitately retreated, leaving a token of his liberality in the hands of the poor scholar. Richard being afterwards asked what he thought of the learned person with whom he had been conversing, replied, "He is less ignorant than most men."

Many are the singular and amusing anecdotes recorded of Richard in this Memoir, which concludes with a short comparison between the subject of it and the famous Moses Mendelsohn and the learned Magliabechi. The portrait of Richard, prefixed to it, is from a drawing by Williamson, formerly a portrait painter at Liverpool, of considerable ability. The plate is etched by Mrs. Dawson Turner, of Yarmouth, whose efforts in this branch of art have excited so much admiration amongst her friends. The following letter to Mr. Dawson Turner, relating to this plate, contains an anecdote highly illustrative of Richard's habits and peculiar turn of mind:—

"I had the pleasure of receiving your kind favour of the 18th July enclosing an impression of the etching of my Welsh friend by Mrs. Turner, for which I cannot sufficiently express my thanks. The likeness is admirable; so that it is impossible that any person who has seen him

should not immediately recognise it; and the execution of it is beautiful beyond what I could have thought it was in the power of the needle to produce; so that it may be ranked amongst the happiest of Mrs. Turner's works. This etching has confirmed me in the idea, in which I hope Mrs. Turner will agree with me, that there is a character of apostolic simplicity in the countenance which is highly interesting, and which, I am certain, will attract the attention of the public, and be the chief cause of any advantage which this poor child of adversity may derive from the Memoir.

"With respect to the inscription to be placed under it, I must give you a singular anecdote. A day or two after I received the etching, Richard called, as he is in the frequent habit of doing, and I showed it him, and asked him if he knew it, when, after some strange turns of his head from side to side, he said, 'It is my portrait.' I then told him I wished him to give me an inscription of his name, &c. to put under it; when, suddenly opening his waistcoat, he began to unwind from around his body a piece of white calico, at least five or six feet long by three broad, at the top of which there appeared, in large letters inscribed by himself, 'Verbum Dei Libertas,' and towards the bottom the following inscription: —

"'R. Johannis, Caernarvonensis, Linguæ

Hebraæ professor, Rabbi Nathan unus e Discipulis, et veritatis libertatisque indignissimus Martyr.'

"This seemed to me the more extraordinary as he had not the least idea of his head being engraved or any such inscription wanted, nor am I satisfied that it would be proper to adopt the above; but on this you shall hear again from me."

The profits of the Memoir were employed in supporting the subject of it*; and this little fund was increased by the contributions of some benevolent persons to whom the publication was the means of making him known. The money thus raised, however, has since been exhausted; and Richard, who is still residing in Liverpool, pursuing his learned occupations with unceasing zeal, is sup-

* The following advertisement was prefixed to the Memoir:—

"Any profits that may arise from this publication will be applied to make a provision for the person who is the subject of it, and whose destitute situation requires the benevolent aid of those who may be disposed to afford him their assistance.

"Subscriptions will be received, and the application of them directed, by the under mentioned.

WILLIAM WALLACE CURRIE,
AMBROSE LACE,
SAMUEL PARKES,
WILLIAM RATHBONE,
WILLIAM STANLEY ROSCOE,
J. ASHTON YATES,
} of Liverpool."

ported, in scanty comfort, by some of his charitable friends.

The following sonnet was written by Mr. Roscoe while engaged in preparing for the press the "Memoir of Richard Roberts:" —

Child of affliction! hapless was the hour
That gave thee birth! Thine infancy, distress;
Thy young companions, scorn and wretchedness;
And pain and penury thine only dower.
Yet amidst this, thine utter helplessness,
There is an eye beholds thee; that can see
Thy patient sufferings, deep humility,
And thy life-pang of conscious uselessness—
Nor yet will He, the mighty One, who gave
Thy shrouded talents, unaccomplish'd leave
The work his forming hand so well begun;
But in his own good time will pour the light
Thro' the thick film that veils thy mental sight,
And manifest Himself—an uneclipsed sun.

In the summer of 1822 Mr. Roscoe left his residence in Liverpool, and took a house in Lodge Lane, Toxteth Park, about a mile from the town. In the following letters to one of his daughters he gives some description of his new abode: —

"I have to thank you for your very acceptable letter, and for the account you give of your proceedings; from which I am happy to find you avail yourself of the opportunities of enjoyment which the kindness of your friends affords you. I hope I shall not interrupt so pleasant a dream by informing you what you are

to expect when you awake. You will find us in our new habitation, with which we are much pleased. Your mother feels a most sensible change for the better in the air and situation. The front door has ceased to ring, and the wheels of the Ropery to jar. Our rooms are all appropriated. Mine is spacious and commodious; and I am no longer under the *dilemma* of either sitting with my doors and windows open, or being choked. Our garden, though small, is agreeable and useful, and is much enjoyed by us all, particularly Mary Anne and Tom. The latter is before my eyes robbing the birds of their cherries. A plot is laid out for Mary Anne and you, not as joint-tenants, but in severalty; so that you will each have your own. You must not suppose that by all this I wish to tempt you to shorten your visit. I only wish to show you that we are as content and as happy as circumstances will admit, to which I may add that your mother's health is certainly improved, upon the whole, since our removal.

" Since you left us, I have been very closely employed in a new work which I have just finished, and am sending to M'Creery to be printed, under the title of *Additional Observations on Penal Jurisprudence*, being a sharp criticism on an article in the Edinburgh Review on Prison Discipline, and on the proposed plan of punishing criminals in America, by solitary

confinement. I have mixed it up together in great haste, and have put as much *caustic* into it as I possibly could.

"I shall leave a little space for Mary Anne to tell you any further news, and with kind remembrances to Mr. and Mrs. Hutton, and all our friends, I remain," &c.

In the course of the present year, Mr. Roscoe lost one of his earliest, and, indeed, one of his latest literary friends, in Dr. Aikin, who died at his house in Stoke Newington, after a long and painful illness. The intimacy had arisen at a very early period of life, during the residence of Dr. Aikin with his father, at the Warrington academy, to which place Mr. Roscoe paid several visits for the purpose of enjoying the society of Dr. Aikin and Dr. Enfield. On the removal of the former from Warrington, he occasionally corresponded with Mr. Roscoe on subjects of literary interest, and the letters of both the parties evince, in a very pleasing manner, their mutual attachment and respect. On the publication of his 'Memoirs of Huet,' Dr. Aikin took the opportunity of testifying more publicly his esteem for his friend, in a dedication prefixed to that work, a mark of friendship which Mr. Roscoe acknowledged in the following letter: —

* * * "Allow me to assure you that, however my vanity may be gratified in being thus

noticed, that sentiment is wholly absorbed in the pleasure I feel in this additional proof of your friendship, and in finding that, in this somewhat advanced period of life, the esteem and attachment which I so early imbibed, and have for so many years invariably felt for you, are so cordially and affectionately returned. Though we have neither of us arrived at the age of Huet, yet it is highly pleasing to reflect that you and I have hitherto retained the same invariable attachment to literary studies which animated us in our youthful days, and, I believe, I may justly add, the same sensibility to all the pleasures of friendship and the delights of social intercourse. That we shall rival in longevity the French scholar is not perhaps to be either expected or wished; but I trust the same occupations and the same enjoyments will continue to throw over the evening of our lives a beam as pleasing, if not as bright, as that of our morning; and if when the scene is closed my name should ever be recalled to memory, be assured it cannot be found in a situation more gratifying to my wishes than as associated in any manner with your own."

Of the literary correspondence between Dr. Aikin and Mr. Roscoe, the following letter, written by the latter immediately after the perusal of the 'Life of Huet,' is a pleasing specimen:—

"I have now gone through the 'Memoirs of

Huet,' and have to return you my most sincere thanks for the entertainment they have afforded me. That the reign of Louis XIV. was distinguished by an extraordinary attention to literature, and by a great number of eminent men, is well known; but it is really surprising to see them pass in review before us; and one cannot but admit the inference which the southern nations of Europe derive from this circumstance, viz. that the sciences and arts may flourish under a monarchical government; but which, after all, will not prove that they flourish as well as under a more popular form, and of this, the 'Memoirs of Huet' afford sufficient proofs. With respect to Huet, he seems to have acquitted himself of the difficult task of an autobiographer as well as could be expected; but, like many others who have attempted it, he will have added but little to his permanent fame by this portion of his labours. In fact, this mode of writing is full of insuperable difficulties. In order to avoid the imputation of vanity, the author is obliged to omit whatever is favourable to his character, whilst all that is to his disadvantage is taken for granted, on the best possible evidence. Is it possible to suppose that two of the greatest men of the last century could have passed through life with so total a disregard to the welfare of others, and such a selfish attachment to their own little narrow gratification, as Rousseau and Gibbon ap-

pear to have done? and may we not reasonably suppose that our good bishop in the course of his life performed many acts of beneficence, besides obtaining for the Jesuits the right of enclosing a walk, of which he deprived the public? I know not, however, that this detracts from the interest of the work. It is the bishop's own loss; but such is the nature of the human mind that we can very well pardon the omission, and perhaps derive more gratification from the discovery of his failings than we should from the display of his virtues.

"Of your part in this publication, I can only say that it has all the characteristic excellencies of your other writings. The translation reads with all the ease and freedom of an original, and your very numerous and satisfactory anecdotes give double interest to the work. It is with pleasure I trace in this department the same candid spirit and sound judgment as in your other works, but mellowed and improved by the observation and reflection of riper years. I cannot, however, help observing, that if time has mellowed the fruits of your genius, it has not destroyed their original flavour; as a proof of which, I may refer to vol. ii. p. 143., in which I find you still the advocate of 'those kindly affections by which mankind are held together;' a cause which I hope we shall neither of us give up but with life.

"You do me the honour of asking me whether I can point out any other subject of a similar nature to your last, and what I think of a 'Life of Muratori?' at the same time suggesting that I may probably have some idea of prosecuting my inquiries into the literature of Italy. If that were the case, there is no one whom I should sooner choose for a fellow-labourer than yourself; but, in fact, I have laid aside all such intentions, and if I can accomplish a little memoir of our ever-lamented friend Currie, shall never more present myself before the public. I am, however, inclined to think that Muratori would not afford you a sufficient foundation on which to build your intended superstructure. Although a man of diversified talent and sound learning, yet I do not know that his connections with persons of great eminence were very extensive; and his epistolary correspondence, of which I have two volumes, is chiefly confined to researches for the materials of his great work on the 'Antiquities of Italy.' Even the period, though distinguished by some celebrated characters, and particularly by several excellent lyric poets, would, as I apprehend, be found inferior in point of interest, not only to former times in Italy, but to the contemporary state of literature both in France and England. On this, however, I speak with great hesitation; and should be sorry to deter you from a work which, in your hands,

could not but be highly instructive. If, however, a choice were to be made between the two subjects you have mentioned, I should prefer the history of English literature, a work which is greatly wanted, and which I am convinced that no one can execute better than yourself. That it will, as you observe, be a work of great extent and labour, cannot be denied, but at the same time the plan might be so formed as to keep it within a reasonable compass, with a chance of rendering it even more popular and more useful than a work upon a very extended plan. All that has hitherto been done by Warton, Percy, Ellis, &c. has had a reference only to the poetry of the country, and their works are, in fact, rather a series of specimens than a history. In this respect, the model you propose would suggest a different mode of execution, more condensed in its matter, but more particular in information; mostly referring the reader to the original works if he wishes to know more on the subject, but relating the progress of each branch of literature in one continued narrative. For a work of this nature, the materials are not difficult to be found; and I should suppose that two volumes in quarto, or four in octavo, might comprise this very interesting work, which I think would be more likely to succeed than any other of a similar nature that I can at present suggest."

During the publication of the 'Athenæum,' a

periodical work conducted by Dr. Aikin, Mr. Roscoe contributed a few poetical pieces to the pages of that work, together with the memoir of Mr. Rathbone, already noticed, and a very few other articles.

The feelings of Mr. Roscoe on the death of Dr. Aikin are expressed in the following letter to Miss Aikin:—

"Although much later than my feelings dictated, you will, I am sure, excuse a few lines to express to you how truly I have sympathised with you, on the loss of your excellent father and my old and highly valued friend. Not because I conceive that I can say any thing to relieve what I well know you must feel on the occasion, but because it is a satisfaction to my own mind to express to one so dear to him the sincere and affectionate attachment I entertained for him, and the gratitude I owe to him for the advantages derived from his friendship and society at an early period of my life. My long acquaintance with him is indeed connected with the most pleasing recollections. From having accompanied him to his little botanical garden in the vicinity of Warrington, I first imbibed a relish for these pursuits; and I well remember that on his recommendation I first was led to the perusal of the modern writers of Latin poetry—occupations which have since afforded me an inexhaustible source of pleasure. To this I might

truly add, the information and delight which I have derived from his writings, which have always appeared to me to be the perfect image of his own elegant, correct, and highly cultivated mind, and which, I have no doubt, from the variety and utility of their subjects and the purity and precision of their style, will continue to be admired as long as any relish remains of what is truly excellent.

"In the sincere sorrow that must attend the loss of such a man, it is, however, delightful to recollect how much of his spirit yet remains. Whether we regard him in a scientific or a literary light, we still find him in his best disciples, his own children, to whom the world will now look for a continuation of those labours which have hitherto been so eminently successful. That you, my dear friend, will not disappoint us, you have already given us sufficient earnest; and I think I know you too well, to doubt of your perseverance. It is true the reign of Charles, compared with that of James, is like a serious history compared with a course of fantastic adventures; but you have shown that you are capable of just reflection on the gravest subjects, and that the most important concerns of states are not less within the scope of your powers than the lighter touches of lively and interesting anecdote."

During the whole of the spring and summer of the year 1823 Mr. Roscoe was closely engaged in preparing for the press the new edition of Pope,

but in the autumn of that year he made another excursion to London and Holkham. On his journey to the latter place, he was attacked with an illness, arising, probably, from the same causes which a few years afterwards produced more alarming effects. Of this attack, he gave as cheerful a representation as he could in his letters to his family.

"As I presume Mary Anne may have thrown out some hints of my having been so far indisposed on my way to Holkham, as to have got myself into the hands of a doctor, and narrowly escaped 'losing a little blood,' I think it may be some satisfaction to you to have a certificate under my own hand that I am yet in the land of the living; and I hope I may also add, recovering from the effects of a feverish attack, which came upon me some days before I left London, but which I hoped would have been removed by the journey. This, however, was not the case; so that I was obliged to stop a night at Fakenham, and to be put under a regular course of discipline, attended by physician, apothecary, &c.; and on the following day, the doctor paid me a visit in state, at Holkham, with which you will judge how greatly I was delighted. This, however, was his last visit; and to cut short the subject, I hope I may consider myself beyond the necessity of further assistance, although, I must acknowledge, I think the prescriptions were of considerable service to me."

The following letters to Mrs. Roscoe will give an idea of the engagements and occupations of Mr. Roscoe during this visit to London : —

" As J. C. sets out in the morning on his return to Liverpool, I could not let him depart without a line to inform you that I continue in tolerable health and spirits, and as fully employed as it is possible for me to be. We are now making great progress towards finishing the works of Pope, which will be quite ready by the time desired by the booksellers, and to this almost all my efforts have hitherto been directed. I have also finally settled my agreement with Mr. Graves, for lithographing, printing, and colouring my plants, at a price which I consider very reasonable. On Sunday, Henry and I went to Essex Street Chapel, and heard a Mr. Cannon preach a very good sermon, after which we called on Mr. Belsham, and found him, as he hopes, recovering from his long indisposition. On Tuesday I dined with a scientific party at Dr. Bostock's; and yesterday I met a literary one at Mr. Cadell's, and was highly entertained by the conviviality, wit, and excellent singing of Mr. James Smith, Mrs. Cadell's brother, and one of the authors of the 'Rejected Addresses.' On Sunday we are to dine with Miss Duckworth, so that you have the whole of our proceedings. * * * As to what is going on here, I am a perfect stranger, except as far as appears from

'The Morning Chronicle,' which I see every morning at breakfast, and shall send to Liverpool every evening as long as I stay, that you may all be as wise as myself.

* * * * *

"Notwithstanding the kindness I have experienced through all my peregrinations, I am not sorry to reflect that more than one half of the time proposed for my absence is now over, and that within the course of another month I may have the pleasure of seeing you again, when, if I should find you in a state of health equal to my daily wishes and prayers, it will be the greatest blessing that can happen to me."

In another letter, written a few weeks after the preceding, he says, "Our frolic is now nearly over, and we have taken places in the Liverpool mail for to-morrow evening. We shall not, however, proceed direct to Liverpool, having received an invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Caldwell to stop at Linley Wood, which we have promised to do; so that we shall not reach home before Saturday. I will not attempt to express to you the extreme hurry in which I have lived since my arrival in London, where I have scarcely had a moment to myself, and am obliged to write in great haste this line, to acquaint you with our plans. This morning I breakfasted with Sir Thomas Lawrence, am going to dine at Mr. Duckworth's, and pass the evening at

Dr. Southwood Smith's, which you may take as a sample of my proceedings. I have, however, accomplished in a great degree the various objects which brought me to town, and some others which I did not expect, particularly the publication of a new edition of Lorenzo and Leo, to which Cadell has consented."

A number of the gentlemen of Liverpool, friends to the abolition of slavery, having shortly before this time formed themselves into a society to promote this great object, Mr. Roscoe was requested by them to fill the office of president of the society, a request to which he cheerfully yielded. It having been thought proper, in the spring of the present year, that a Declaration of the objects which the society had in view should be published, Mr. Roscoe consented to prepare this document, which was printed in the shape of a small tract, under the title of "A Declaration of the Objects of the Liverpool Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery."*

The tone of this Declaration, though firm, is moderate, and the measures which it recommends seem to offer the most practicable means of accomplishing the final extinction of slavery in our colonies: —

* Liverpool: printed by James Smith; published by Hatchard & Son, and J. & A. Arch, London.

"The system of slavery has been too long continued, and its devoted objects have been degraded too low in the scale of humanity, to allow it to be supposed that the act of a moment can repair the injuries and abuses of ages, or that deep-founded habits and inveterate prejudices can be removed, without the adoption of such measures as are indispensably requisite for that purpose. With every disposition on the part of the colonial proprietors to adopt a different system, how would it be possible to accomplish it without some necessary precautions, some deliberate and gradual process, which should progressively give to the slave the feeling of independence without the danger of licentiousness, and enable him to perceive that the necessity of providing for his own subsistence, though less degrading, is not less imperative, than that under which he had before been compelled to return to his daily task."

In the following passage a reference is made to a former publication of Mr. Roscoe, the "General View of the African Slave Trade."

"Although little has hitherto been said of the particular mode in which this great object might be most safely and beneficially accomplished, yet it has not wholly escaped the notice of the advocates for the abolition of slavery. So long ago as the year 1788, a plan was published by a member of this society for the gradual im-

provement of the condition of the slaves in the British colonies, and the consequent termination of the trade for slaves to Africa. By this plan, it was proposed to improve the personal rights of the slaves; to establish courts of judicature independent of merchants or planters; to introduce the laws of England, particularly trial by jury; to punish the wilful murder of a slave by death, which was not then generally the case; to render the testimony of a slave evidence to go to the consideration of a jury; to protect them from wanton and illegal punishment; to enable them to retain property by law; to encourage them to marry; and to grant them exemptions and privileges in proportion to the number of children brought up; to allow them to work, or hire themselves out, on the days of exemption; to provide for their religious instruction and attendance on divine worship; and to allow them to purchase their freedom on certain terms; with such other regulations as seemed necessary to raise them in the scale of society, preparatory to their final emancipation. In addition to these internal regulations, the due attention of the proprietors to the increase and improvement of their slave population was proposed to be promoted by a duty upon every slave imported, which would be increased at different periods till the year 1800, when it was proposed entirely to prohibit the trade.

"Had this or any plan of a similar naturebeen carried into effect, the consequence would have been, that an immediate alteration would have taken place in the condition of the slave, which, by a gradual process, would have rendered him capable of still higher improvement; that seven years before the declared abolition of the slave trade by the British legislature, that trade would have been effectually abolished, and the colonies at this day would have been able to resist the competition of any other part of the world; whilst, with the continuance of slavery, they are now in a much more unfavourable state than when such publication took place.

"Whether it may be thought proper to resort to these or similar measures, for gradually relaxing the bonds of slavery, and giving to its unfortunate victims the rank and feelings of human beings, it must rest with the legislature of Great Britain, and the prudence and good sense of the colonial proprietors, to determine. That since the publication of the tract last mentioned, many instances have occurred of the manumission of slaves, some of them on an extensive scale, and with acknowledged advantage to their former owners, is certain; nor is it improbable that measures might be adopted which might render such result general, within a much shorter time than that before mentioned. To contribute, as far as its efforts can be rendered available, to-

wards the immediate mitigation of the evils attendant on slavery, and to obtain its entire abolition as soon as it can be accomplished by all reasonable, proper, and effectual means, is the express object of this society, and its resolution is formed, not to desist till such object be accomplished."

CHAPTER XVIII.

1824.

Death of Mrs. Roscoe.—Verses addressed to her at different times by Mr. Roscoe.—Letter from Mr. M'Creery on occasion of her death.—Sonnet addressed to her in early life by her son.—Letter from Mr. Roscoe to Dr. Wallich.—Mr. Roscoe resumes the study of botany, and particularly of the Monandrian plants.—His new arrangement of the plants of the Monandrian class, usually called Scitamineæ—referred to by Sir J. E. Smith in Dr. Rees's Cyclopædia.—Letter from Sir J. E. Smith on the merits of this arrangement.—Name of "Roscoea" given by him to a new order of Scitaminean plants.—Present of plants to the Botanic Garden from Dr. Wallich.—Correspondence of Mr. Roscoe with him.—Projected publication of Specimens of the Scitaminean Plants.—Mr. Roscoe is elected an Honorary Associate of the Royal Society of Literature, and afterwards an Associate of the First Class—receives the gold medal of the Society—is elected Corresponding Member of the Academy della Crusca.—Letter of the Secretary with the diploma.—Mr. Roscoe's reply—is elected Member of the New York Horticultural Society—visits London again—letter to his daughter.

CHAPTER XVIII.

In the autumn of the present year, Mr. Roscoe sustained an irreparable loss in the death of her, who for upwards of forty years had been his constant companion and friend. During the latter part of her life, the health of Mrs. Roscoe had suffered much, and for several years before this time had been in a very precarious state. Within the last few months it declined rapidly; and notwithstanding the most skilful medical attention, on the 24th of September, 1824, her sufferings were terminated by death.

Her character and virtues will be best illustrated by the testimony of him to whose happiness her long and anxious, and too often painful life, was devoted. That strong attachment, which was the pride and the joy of her youth, remained unimpaired amid the wreck of wealth and the reverses of fortune. "Of my own feelings," she says, in a letter written to Mr. Roscoe, during his residence at Chat Moss in 1820,—"of my own feelings, in the hope of your returning, I say nothing. You know well, that there is one object in this world, in which all my hopes, fears, enjoyments,—all my *earthly* enjoyments, centre."

The passages already extracted from the domestic correspondence of Mr. Roscoe, may give some idea of the truth and sincerity with which this affection was returned. But it was not only when absence afforded him the opportunity, that he took pleasure in expressing the tenderness, the friendship, and the respect with which he regarded her. Various occasions occurred, of which he gladly availed himself, to offer to her, generally in verse, some token of his affection. Of these domestic poems, so honourable to her memory, a few will be given in these pages, where, it is hoped, they will not be considered as misplaced.

The following sonnet was written in the year 1788, while both Mr. and Mrs. Roscoe were absent from home, and from one another.

SONNET.

" From dear domestic scenes and calm delights
My Julia wanders!—ah, not fond to roam!
I, too, forsake awhile my peaceful home,
And far from her consume the tedious night.
Yet shall our dove-like wishes take their flight,
At that loved home to meet, and hovering there,
Screen from intruding harms our children dear,
Till happier hours return, when the glad sight
Of them, and of each other, shall repay,
With ten-fold interest, all the transient pain
That absence brings, whilst, modest and sincere,
Our eldest born shall chide our long delay;
Nor shall our second court a smile in vain,
Nor he whose looks of love our latest fondness share."

The verses which follow are dated in the succeeding year.

To J. R.

ON HER BIRTH-DAY AND WEDDING DAY.

" Upborne on wings that know no stay,
Time sweeps with trackless course along;
Yet ere we pass this favour'd day,
We 'll smooth his wrinkles with a song.

" For since to bless my vows sincere,
My Julia pledged her constant love,
Seven times hath Autumn crown'd the year,
Seven times hath Winter stripp'd the grove.

" Come, then, and on this point of time,
A moment let our steps delay;
Recall the seasons of our prime,
Or mark what waits our future day.

" Thus from some mountain's airy height,
The pilgrim takes his backward view;
On distant prospects feasts his sight,
And from past pleasures augurs new.

" Say, then, my fair, hast thou forgot
Those hours to Love and Fancy dear,
When, reckless of our future lot,
Hope only crown'd the rolling year?

" When like an April's changeful day,
Of storm, of sunshine, and of rain,
Joy gilded with his transient ray,
The lowering clouds of fear and pain.

" I boasted not paternal wealth,
Nor was the golden portion thine;
Thy dower was innocence and health,
And Love and Industry were mine."

The sonnet addressed to Mrs. Roscoe, on the publication of "The Nurse," has already been given.

During his absence from home in 1807, while attending his parliamentary duties, Mr. Roscoe felt, very sensibly, the loss of her society. To her he had been accustomed to refer for advice and assistance in every difficulty; and for sympathy and support under all the circumstances of his life. Her arrival in London was welcomed by the following lines:—

"Come! bright example of unalter'd truth!
O come, dear partner of my widow'd heart;
Light of my life, companion of my youth,
O come, and never, never let us part.

"O from that hour that tore me from thy sight,
What harpy griefs have fasten'd on my breast;
Whilst night consigns to day, and day to night,
The scorpion rods that rob my soul of rest.

"O come! thy presence shall the clouds dispel,
Thy voice shall soothe me, and thy counsels guide;
For thou alone canst soothe the tempest's swell,
And snatch me, struggling, from the whelming tide."

Upon the publication of a small volume of poems, in 1820, by different members of his own family, he presented a copy to Mrs. Roscoe, with the following inscription:—

"Tho' from our early hopes cast down,
Tho' Fortune smiled but to deceive us;
O think not, Love, her envious frown
Of every blessing can bereave us;

"Enough, if midst our youthful race,
With grateful hearts to Heaven resign'd,
A parent's raptured eye may trace
The richer treasures of the mind."

And in the following year, in another volume, containing a larger collection of similar poems, he inscribed, on leaving home, some additional verses: —

"Some forty years, or more, are fled,
Unless through age my memory falter,
Since Love our youthful footsteps led,
And join'd our hands at Hymen's altar.

"Through all the long succeeding scene,
Of sunshine days and stormy weather,
Where'er our changeful lot has been,
Our days have still roll'd on together.

"And whilst to joys and sorrows past,
I turn with varying recollection,
O'er all one brighter tint is cast,
Of constant love and kind affection.

"But now a prudent voice I hear,
That must awhile of home bereave me;
And now the hour approaches near,
When for a season I must leave thee.

"Then take this book, and if perchance
Some soft and pensive thoughts come o'er thee,
Cast on its page thy tearful glance,
And it shall soon to peace restore thee.

"Nor will we with ungrateful hearts,
Our bliss by Fortune's changes measure;
Whilst here our children's verse imparts
A purer bliss, a richer treasure."

The following is the testimony of one who had known her long and intimately in her happiest days:—

"Although, from the daily accounts which Mr. Robert Roscoe gave me, of the distressing state to which Mrs. Roscoe was reduced, I expected every morning to hear of her release from her continued suffering, yet believe me, your letter, informing me of the close of her valuable life, struck me almost with as great a shock, as if it were an event that could not have been anticipated. Not having seen her during her long illness, I can only remember what she was when in the enjoyment of health, and of all the blessings attendant upon it. Her heart and her cares were yours and her family's, with a devotion so pure, as to give me (who had more frequent opportunities of witnessing them, through many years of her life, than almost any other of your friends) the most exalted opinion of the nobleness of her character, and of the happiness you enjoyed in the possession of such a companion. To every one who came within the range of her influence, she was generous, kind, and benevolent. As a friend of long standing, I have to lament her; for when I call to mind the many happy hours I have passed with her and you, and the marks of esteem she always extended towards me, from the moment I was introduced

to you, I cannot smother the grief that the close of her life has inspired. * * * *

"J. M'CREERY."

The affectionate and tender devotion of her heart to her children, bound them to her by ties of the strongest kind, and their feelings towards her were not unfrequently evinced, as their father's were, in the language of verse. In the following sonnet, written upwards of thirty years since, one of her sons dedicated to her a small collection of unpublished poems.

SONNET.

"Untaught to walk the Aonian hills among,
Nor skill'd to plant the dark-leaved laurel tree,
Or quaff the immortal fount of Castaly;
Yet may I frame for thee my youthful song,
Numb'ring the blessings which thy whisp'ring tongue
Pour'd on my life, as slumb'ring on thy knee,
From fount more pure thou fed'st my infancy;
And as these unripe strains to thee belong,
(If He in heaven, approving, may inspire
The breathing genius of maturer age),
So thine the labour of my future days.
Content, if to this frail, untimely page,
Or loftier sounding of that deep-strung lyre,
Thou yield that dearest meed, a mother's praise."

The feelings of Mr. Roscoe suffered deeply from this loss; which interrupted for a time his usual literary correspondence. His chief consolation he found in the society of his family; whose affection for him was, if possible, drawn

closer by the calamity which, in common with themselves, he had sustained. The satisfaction which he felt in this domestic intercourse, a subject to which he in general refrained from adverting, is touched upon in the following extract from a letter to his friend, Dr. Wallich, written a few months after the death of Mrs. Roscoe: —

"Believe me, my dear Sir, I can most truly participate in your feelings, in your separation (though temporary only) from your wife and family; having myself sustained, a few months since, the greatest loss I ever experienced, in the death of my faithful partner, with whom I lived upwards of forty years in uninterrupted confidence and harmony, and by whom I have now living seven sons (four of them married, with families), and two daughters; the latter of whom only still reside with me, and by their affectionate attention compensate me, as far as possible, for my irreparable loss, and by the cultivation of a decided talent for literature (of which I hope, at some time, to send you a specimen), and the earnest and active interest which they take in the promotion of useful establishments for the improvement of their own sex, keep up (together with my own pretty numerous avocations), such an incessant variety of employment as never suffers a moment to hang heavy on our hands, and scarcely leaves us time for that correspondence with the detached part of our family

(all of whom are now established in different parts of the kingdom, in professions and occupations for themselves), which we all are so desirous to maintain."

The science of botany, which at an early period had afforded so much pleasure to Mr. Roscoe, and to which he had made several contributions in the pages of the "Linnæan Transactions," became towards the close of his life an object of still greater interest to him. He often expressed an opinion, that a science so extensive as this was best advanced when those who made it their study selected some particular branch, to the illustration of which their attention might be confined; and upon this principle he had, for many years, applied all the time which it was in his power to bestow upon the study to the investigation of a rare and beautiful tribe, the Monandrian plants of the order *Scitamineæ*. A new arrangement of these plants was, as already stated, suggested by him in a paper communicated to the Linnæan Society in the year 1806, bearing the title of "A new Arrangement of the Plants of the Monandrian Class, usually called Scitamineæ." *

The attention of many celebrated botanists had been employed upon this beautiful order,

* Read April 15. and May 6. 1806. Trans. vol. viii. p. 330.

which had been illustrated by the descriptions of Koenig, Retzius, and Swartz; but no satisfactory arrangement of the plants composing it had been suggested before the attempt made by Mr. Roscoe, in the paper just mentioned. This arrangement was adopted by Sir J. E. Smith, who thus speaks of it in the article *Scitamineæ*, written by him for Dr. Rees's Cyclopædia:—

"Mr. Roscoe, of Liverpool, first suggested a method of reducing the genera of the *Scitamineæ* to regular order by essential characters, derived from the structure of the stamen, particularly its filament. This principle is found to be the only one which, while it is clear and precise in defining technical essential characters, leads to the establishment of natural genera; for the inflorescence, of which Adanson had first shown the importance in this respect, though not admitted by Mr. Roscoe into his characters, goes along with and confirms them all. The labours of Giseke do not seem to have come under the inspection of this ingenious writer, nor would they certainly have yielded him any assistance. He reviews the attempts of other preceding botanists, and, after showing the insufficiency or uncertainty of other modes of generic definition, proposes his own, according to which he defines all the known genera of this natural order, ranging under each all the known

species of which he could discover any certain indications."

In noticing this paper, in a letter to the author (2d June, 1806), Sir James Smith says,—"Your letter was highly approved by every body. Dryander (no complimenter) was excited by it to take up the subject afresh; and he and I went carefully over your whole paper, turning to references, specimens, &c. *I* have already received the highest compliment possible from Aiton and Lambert, who, on hearing your paper, conceived that you could scarcely have had knowledge or materials to compose it, and that *I* must have written it! See what it is to have a name! I certainly could not have written it. I have satisfied them with the real truth, and Dryander also. With this view, I purposely let him read over your *original* MS. and see all my scratches and alterations, which being so few, and chiefly about technical matters, could do you no discredit. I wish you therefore carefully to preserve this original manuscript as it is; it had best be printed from this present copy, which must then be preserved in the archives of our Linnæan Society."

The contributions thus made by Mr. Roscoe to this branch of the science, induced Sir J. E. Smith to dedicate to him a new and distinct order of the Scitaminean plants, to which he

gave the name of *Roscoea.** Of this genus Mr. Roscoe afterwards received many new species, several of which are figured in the *Monandrian Plants.*

The opportunities of procuring specimens of the Scitamineæ which the botanic garden at Liverpool offered, enabled Mr. Roscoe gradually to extend his knowledge of a tribe of plants, which was yearly receiving the most valuable accessions from the East, and from other parts of the world. A valuable present to the botanic garden at Liverpool, of new plants from Dr. Wallich, Superintendent of the botanic garden at Calcutta, led to a correspondence between that gentleman and Mr. Roscoe, and subsequently to a warm and sincere friendship. From him Mr. Roscoe derived much information respecting the tribe of plants which formed his peculiar study; and the numerous new specimens for which he was indebted to the kindness of Dr. Wallich first led him to project a publication, which was the means of affording him a most pleasing occupation during the latter years of his life.

In a letter to Dr. Wallich, dated in January, 1819, he says, — "The earnestness with which

* See art. *Roscoea*, Rees's Cyc. In a letter, dated in July, 1826, Sir James says, "How little did Linnæus, or any body till now, know of this tribe! You have well earned your *Roscoea*."

I have for many years collected specimens of the Scitaminean tribe, as well in living plants as figures, is by no means diminished; but although we have at present in our botanic garden many specimens, yet it is but seldom we have the good fortune to see them flower in this country. On this account, I should esteem it a very particular favour, if, at some future opportunity, you could transmit me a few specimens of the flower-spikes and seeds of any species which may happen to bloom with you in the course of the season."

In a letter written during the autumn of the same year, he says,—"The letter accompanying this was intended to have gone by the John Tobin, but missed the opportunity. May I beg you to consider it as the best proof I can give of the high value I place upon your kind communications and inestimable presents, and of my earnest desire to co-operate with you in extending the knowledge of the beautiful tribe of plants in which we are both so deeply interested. And may you, my dear Sir, find, as I have done, in the contemplation of the works of nature, and the abundant proofs of the wisdom and goodness of God, a consolation for the calamities of life, and particularly for the heavy loss with which you have been recently afflicted. Be assured that I shall always consider myself obliged and honoured by your correspondence,

and that I am with the most friendly attachment and sincerest respect always faithfully yours,

"W. R."

In the early part of this year Mr. Roscoe was elected an honorary associate of the Royal Society of Literature, a distinction voluntarily conferred upon him by the council of the Society. A few months afterwards he had the additional honour of being appointed an Associate of the First Class, a body which included some of the most distinguished names in English literature, and, amongst others, that of his friend Mr. Mathias. In assuming his new rank in the society, Mr. Roscoe, in conformity with its regulations, selected Literary History as the particular branch of learning which, as an associate of the Society, he desired to profess. By the munificence of the late king, the annual sum of one hundred guineas was paid to each of the associates of the first class; but, on his decease, the payments were withheld, and have not since been renewed. In the year 1827, the great gold medal of the Society was awarded to Mr. Roscoe, for his merits as an historian. It was frequently a source of regret to him that the state of his health, and the pressing nature of his literary engagements prevented him from communicating so frequently as he could have wished with the Society.

These honours were followed by others no less gratifying to the feelings of Mr. Roscoe. The Academy della Crusca elected him a Corresponding Member. His diploma was accompanied by the following letter from the secretary of the Institution: —

" Ornatissimo Signor e Collega pregiatissimo,

" Per debito di mio uffizio le trasmetto il Diploma d' Accademico Corrispondente della Crusca.

" Ella fu eletta nell' adunanza del dì 11 del caduto Maggio, e confermata dal sovrano rescritto del 21 del medesimo mese.

" L'Accademia nel far lei di suo collegio ha avuto intendimento di prestare il debito omaggio al celebre illustratore delle geste del Magnifico Lorenzo e del Decimo Leone — due splendentissime glorie di Firenze, ed ha riputato venirlene da questa scelta aumento d'onore.

" Io mi reco a vanto di protestarmi, con quella altissima stima in che ella è tenuta da tutti quì che si conoscono delle umane lettere.

" Di lei ornatissimo Sign^re^.

" Devot^mo^. obb^mo^. Servitore

" G. B. ZANNONI,

" Segret°. dell' Accademia della Crusca.

" Firenze, li 8 Giugno, 1827."

To this communication Mr. Roscoe made the following reply :—

" Ornatissimo Sig^re^. e Collega preg^mo^.

" Ho ricevuto, solamente ora, colla più rispettosa gratitudine l'annunzio che V. S. s'è degnata di farmi, del grande ed inaspettato onore d'essere eletto Accademico Corrispondente della Imperiale e Reale Accademia della Crusca; onore, che siccome sorpassa i miei meriti, così mi priva del potere d'esprimermi degnamente in quest' occasione, facendomi sentire più profondamente le obbligazioni mie a codesta illustre Accademia, ed al Gran Sovrano, sotto la di cui generosa protezione, non solamente ancora mantiene ma accresce di giorno in giorno la sua antica gloria. Piaccia a V. S. Ill^a^. d'esprimere questi miei debiti ma sinceri ringraziamenti agl' illustrissimi Arciconsolo ed Accademici, che si sono degnati di registrarmi tra i lori Socj Correspondenti, e d'accettare l'espressione della mia più viva riconoscenza pei termini gentili coi quali ella m'ha communicato quest' onore.

" Mi creda intanto;

" Di V. S. Illust^a^.

" Divotissimo ed obbligatissimo sev^e^.

" W. Roscoe.

" Toxteth Park, Liverpool, 9 Marzo, 1828."

The New York Horticultural Society, also, over which his correspondent Dr. Hosack presided,

enrolled his name, in the autumn of this year, in the list of their honorary members.

In the summer of the present year Mr. Roscoe was called up to London to give evidence on a trial; and, not being so busily engaged in his literary undertakings as during his former visit, he found time to enter a little more into society than he had done before. The following letter to one of his daughters gives a pleasant account of some of his engagements:—

"As you are the only person who has favoured me with a line since my departure, I address this to you, being in all probability the last I shall write during my stay, although I can by no means say how long that will be, as I am full of engagements, and am obliged to work (as the ship-builders say) double tides. I will give you a specimen how my time passes. Yesterday, engaged busily at home till twelve; then called, by appointment, on the Duke of Gloucester, and sat with him till one. Met the Earl of Bristol, with whose father (the Bishop of Derry) I formerly corresponded; afterwards made as many calls as my time would allow. Dined at seven, at a small family party at Lady Anson's, with Mr. Coke and Lady Anne (with whom I also dined the day before, to celebrate her birthday), and sat till eleven o'clock; then went to a grand assembly at Lady Grosvenor's, to which Lady Derby sent me an invitation from Lady Gros-

venor; staid till near two o'clock; met with Captain Basil Hall, and had some conversation with him, which made me amends for being almost stifled for two hours with dukes and duchesses, &c. I have now just finished to-day's visits, having seen Mrs. Holland (my third call), and found her looking very well again. I am now going to dine with Mr. Anderdon, a gentleman I have never seen, but who lent me Pope's letters. To-morrow I am to dine, at three, with my friend William Allen, at Stoke Newington, when I intend to call on Mrs. Barbauld, and shall return after dinner to Miss Duckworth's (where I should have dined, had I not been previously engaged), to meet Mrs. Gaskell, Miss Aikin, and Mr. Smyth. All this I should enjoy much more, if I did not so often recollect there is a certain person who cannot partake it with me, and who, whilst I am dragged about from one splendid mansion to another, is, I fear, passing her hours in pain and anxiety; which I am sure, however, you and my dear Mary Anne will do all in your power to alleviate during my absence, which I seriously hope will not extend beyond the middle of next week. I have only time to add my affectionate remembrances to the whole family circle, including," &c. &c. "Be a good girl, my dear Jenny, and believe me

"Your kind father,

"W. R."

CHAPTER XIX.

1825—1827.

Edition of the Works of Pope, and new Life. — Letter on this subject to Mr. Mathias. — Merits of former editors. — Prefatory remarks by Mr. Roscoe. — Sources from which he derived new information. — Principle adopted by him in suppressing certain pieces. — Original Letters furnished by J. L. Anderdon, Esq. — Controversy with Mr. Bowles. — His "Final Appeal to the Literary Public, &c." answered by Mr. Roscoe in his "Letter to the Rev. W. Lisle Bowles." — Review of the new edition in the Quarterly Review. — Mr. Bowles publishes his "Lessons in Criticism to W. Roscoe, Esq.," &c. — Extract from a Reply prepared, but not published, by Mr. Roscoe. — His comparative estimate of the characters of Pope and Swift. — Mr. Fuseli — first acquaintance with him — letters from him respecting the Milton Gallery — on Mr. Roscoe's election, &c. — his death — his biography by Mr. Knowles. — Letter to Mr. Knowles. — Correspondence with C. Hughes, Esq., Chargé d'affaires from the United States to Brussels. — Letter to him from Mr. Odevaere, the historical painter, sent to Mr. Roscoe. — Letter to Mr. Hughes. — Decline of Mr. Roscoe's health. — Letter from him to Sir J. E. Smith. — New edition of "Lorenzo de' Medici" and "Leo the Tenth." — Use made by Mr. Roscoe of the notes and illustrations of foreign translators and writers. — Present from the Grand Duke of Tuscany of a new edition of the Poetical Works of Lorenzo. — Letter from Mr. Roscoe in acknowledgment.

CHAPTER XIX.

In the spring of 1821, a new edition of the Works of Pope having been called for, an application was made on behalf of the London booksellers to Mr. Roscoe, requesting him to assume the editorship of the works. This duty he accepted without hesitation. A warm admiration of that author's writings, and an opinion which he had long entertained, that his station as a poet and his character as a man had suffered from the unjust attacks of some of his editors, induced him more readily to undertake a task to which, at this advanced period of life, his strength might almost appear to be unequal. But the energy of his mind was still unimpaired, and probably at no other season of his life was he better qualified to do justice to a subject so important and interesting in a literary point of view.

Of his new task he thus speaks in a letter to Mr. Mathias, dated the 2d October, 1822:—"I am sorry to say that I cannot but consider the literature of this country at present as at a very low ebb. Several of its brightest ornaments have gone off in eccentric directions, and what is left

us is chiefly confined to magazines and reviews, which (as the editor of one of them some time since told us) will shortly comprise all the literature of the country. In no instance, perhaps, is this more evident than in the attacks that have been made on the character and writings of Pope, as well by his two last editors, Warton and Bowles, as by the great herd of modern critics. In order, as far as in my power, to stem this inundation of modern Vandalism, I have undertaken, under the sanction of the London booksellers, to give a new edition of the works of that great man, with a more extensive biographical sketch of his life and character than has hitherto been done, which is intended to be ready for publication in the course of the ensuing spring. In this undertaking I find great pleasure, although it will not be possible to avoid a considerable share of controversy, which, however, I am fully prepared to meet."

One of the principal objects of the new edition was to give a fuller and more accurate Life of the poet than had yet appeared. Of the various biographical accounts of him, it is not unjust to say that there was no one worthy of the subject. Ruffhead's consisted of little more than long and tedious criticisms, interspersed with desultory anecdotes. Johnson, with a prejudice which appears in every page, has not only unjustly depreciated the genius but has as-

sailed the moral character of the poet. Warton, founding his memoir on that of Johnson, though he has given additional interest to the narrative, has done little to raise the subject of his pen to the station he merited. The last editor of the Works of Pope, the Rev. W. L. Bowles, appears to have approached his task with strong feelings of prejudice against the character of Pope, whose reputation has suffered more in his hands than in those of any of his predecessors. The opinions expressed by Mr. Bowles attracted the notice and excited the critical indignation of various persons distinguished in the literary world, and an animated controversy ensued, in which Lord Byron, Mr. Campbell, Mr. Bowles, Mr. Octavius Gilchrist, and the Quarterly Reviewers, took part.

It was at this juncture, while the disputants were still contending for victory, that Mr. Roscoe entered the field. Of the nature of the task he had undertaken, its interest, and its critical dangers, he thus speaks in his preface: —

"It has been so often repeated, that the life of a literary man is unproductive of incident, that we seem disposed to credit it; but although this may soothe the indolence or allay the apprehensions of a biographer, it is by no means borne out by the fact. The professors of literature have always been too ready to pay their homage to the world, and to assent to the idea, that

nothing is deserving of notice but the affairs of states, and the great events and transactions of public life; but it is not for these that we look in the history of a man of genius. We have a different object in view; and his life is as full of interest and information in that after which we enquire, as that of a soldier in his battles, or a politician in his schemes. In human affairs, every thing is permanent in proportion as it is connected with intellect; and whilst the common events of life weary by repetition, and the memory of them perishes through neglect, the productions of the mind preserve their lustre, and even shine brighter from age to age. Under such circumstances, nothing that relates to a favourite author, or his writings, can be indifferent to us. Though he be dead, he yet speaketh; his influence is with us and around us; we feel him breathing in his works; and our minds are formed, and our characters modified, by a master spirit that survives alike the attacks of envy and the efforts of time.

"On this account, it is not surprising that a great degree of earnestness has always been displayed, as to the lives and characters of those, who by their writings have attracted a high degree of public approbation; and this earnestness has been manifested in a peculiar manner respecting Pope. In fact, there is scarcely a circumstance or an incident relating to him, from

the time of his birth to that of his death, that has not been the subject of examination and doubt, and frequently of keen and angry controversy. His family origin, his person, his temper and disposition, his talents and acquirements, his sincerity in his friendships, his religious belief and moral conduct; and, above all, the character and merit of his writings, have given rise to disputes which seem rather to increase than diminish with time; and whilst they occupy the public attention in a manner scarcely inferior to the events of the passing day, have occasionally been carried to an extreme of contention and animosity, not exceeded by any of those in which the author himself was in his lifetime engaged."

The materials for a new biography of Pope were copious, and chiefly to be derived from his own writings, of which none of his former editors had adequately availed themselves. "In adverting," says Mr. Roscoe in his preface, "to the sources from which we may be supposed to derive information respecting the life and character of an author, we must naturally resort to his own works. Of his abilities and genius these are decisive; of his social and moral character they afford strong indications on which to form a correct opinion. In this point of view the writings of Pope would almost furnish his history. Not only are we continually presented with the pic-

ture of his mind under the different lights and circumstances in which it is placed; not only are we informed of his sentiments and feelings, whenever an opportunity is afforded for the display of them, but almost all the incidents of his life are touched upon in such a manner as to enable us to form to ourselves a complete idea of his genius, temper, and character. It would not, indeed, be too much to assert that this representation of himself in his works was one of the chief objects which he perpetually kept in view.

"It is, therefore, to the writings of Pope, and particularly to his correspondence with his friends, that we are to look, if we wish to become acquainted with the individual in the most important transactions and the most deliberate and serious concerns of his life; at the same time we must not forget to make due allowance for those feelings of partiality and of self-attachment which are inseparable from every human being, and which will not only appear in his writings, but will sometimes give to them a grace and an interest which they could not derive from any other source.

"Another authentic source," continues Mr. Roscoe, "to which we may resort for information, is found in the letters of many of the contemporaries and friends of Pope, which are inserted, not only in his own works, but in various other collections. It is true this evidence must also

be received with caution, on account of the partiality of friendship; but it must at the same time be acknowledged that this partiality is seldom obtained without being deserved. At all events, the same discretion which ought to be exercised on his own productions, will be applicable also to those of his friends; and it cannot fail to be in the highest degree interesting to examine and compare the sentiments of so many distinguished individuals, who not only acted a conspicuous part, both in the political and literary history of their own times, but are intimately known to posterity; and whose writings, whilst they serve to elucidate the character of their friend, throw no inconsiderable light upon their own."

In addition to these sources of information, Mr. Roscoe derived much assistance from the "Anecdotes of Pope," collected by the Rev. Joseph Spence, on the authenticity of which he has expressed a decided opinion. In availing himself of the labours of preceding editors, he has relied principally upon those of Warburton, as having in a great degree received the sanction of the author himself. Of the extensive annotations of Dr. Warton he has preserved the greater part, rejecting such as seemed to have no immediate relation to the writings of Pope. From the notes of Mr. Bowles a more restricted selection was made.

Mr. Roscoe's own annotations are not extensive. "His own observations," he says in the preface, "have chiefly been confined to the estimate of the poetical character of the author, and the preliminary notes to the principal poems, in which, as well as in the few remarks on the text, it has been his object rather to correct the errors, and obviate the unfounded censures of former commentators, than to increase the great number of notes by any additions of his own."

Upon one point, involving a nice exercise of judgment, Mr. Roscoe differs from his two immediate predecessors, who had admitted into the collection of the poet's works some pieces, which, from a regard to delicacy, if not to decency, would undoubtedly have been better suppressed. The principle upon which he acted on this occasion, is stated in the following passage:—

"In performing the difficult task which has devolved upon the present editor, of determining what pieces ought to be admitted into this edition, as constituting 'THE WORKS OF POPE,' he has endeavoured to keep in view what he conceives to be the chief duty of an editor, viz. to execute an office which the author can no longer perform for himself, in the same manner as he would have performed it if living; admitting nothing that he would himself have

rejected *,' and rejecting nothing that he would have admitted; not, however, disregarding the additional considerations suggested by the change which has taken place (so greatly for the better) in the sentiments and manners of the present times, and by which, it is probable, that the author himself would have been equally influenced. On the whole, he has reason to believe that the differences which would have arisen between the author and himself on this head, would have been trivial, if any; and that the great variation in this respect will appear between the two last editions of Dr. Warton and Mr. Bowles and the present."

To the kindness of his friends, and to the liberality of those who possessed such documents, Mr. Roscoe was indebted for many original letters and papers, by which he was enabled to throw considerable light upon many disputed points in the history of Pope's life. Thus the three letters from the poet to Richardson, preserved in the magnificent autograph collection of J. L. Anderdon, Esq., afforded him the means of clearing the character of Pope from the as-

* Pope himself acted upon this principle with regard to his friend Gay. "Our poor friend's papers are in my hands; and for as much as is so, I will take care to suppress things unworthy of him."—*Life of Pope*, p. 368.

persion of Warton, that he had acknowledged himself an unbeliever in Christianity.*

When Mr. Roscoe, in the preface to his "Life of Pope," remarked upon the disputes relating to him, "which seemed rather to increase than diminish with time," and "to be carried to an extreme of contention and animosity not exceeded by any of those in which the author himself was in his lifetime engaged," he was probably not fully aware that he was doomed to exhibit, in his own person, a striking proof of the correctness of this observation. A few months after the publication of his work Mr. Bowles again entered the field of controversy, and put forth "A final Appeal to the Literary Public, relative to Pope, in Reply to certain Observations of Mr. Roscoe, in his Edition of that Poet's Works; to which are added, Some Remarks on Lord Byron's Conversations, so far as they relate to the same Subject and the Author: in Letters to a Literary Friend." To this publication Mr. Roscoe was induced to write an answer, under the title of "A Letter to the Rev. W. Lisle Bowles, A. M., Prebendary of Sarum, Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, and former Editor of Pope's Works, in ten volumes, in Reply to his 'Final Appeal to the Literary Public, relative to Pope.'" In the

* Life of Pope, p. 388., &c.

mean time, the new edition of Pope had been reviewed in the Quarterly Review for October, 1825, in which the labours of Mr. Roscoe were commended, and his observations on Mr. Bowles's edition approved. These publications produced from Mr. Bowles "Lessons in Criticism to William Roscoe, Esq., F.R.S., Member of the Della Crusca Society of Florence, F.R.S.L., in Answer to his Letter to Rev. W. L. Bowles, on the Character and Poetry of Pope. With further Lessons in Criticism, to a Quarterly Reviewer." With this pamphlet the discussion terminated, Mr. Roscoe being of opinion that it had been already carried to a sufficient length, and feeling confident that, so far as regarded both Pope and himself, it might here be safely left to the candid construction of the public. He had, indeed, prepared some observations upon Mr. Bowles's last publication; but, upon reflection, he resolved not to prolong the dispute.

Of the merits of this controversy, or of the manner in which it was conducted, it is not necessary, in these pages, to enter into any details. It may not, however, be improper to observe, that though not deficient in the warmth which even a literary controversy always inspires, it was the earnest desire of Mr. Roscoe so to conduct the discussion as not to have reason to regret, at any future time, that he had embarked in it. When he found that his feelings were

likely to carry him beyond this boundary, he was silent.

It would be unjust, both to Mr. Bowles and to himself, to omit the following passages, which formed the conclusion of his intended reply:—

"I cannot, however, conclude these observations, which shall terminate my labours on the subject of Pope and his writings, without expressing my sincere regret, if, in the performance of what I conceive to be the indispensable duty of an editor, I have, on any occasion, transgressed the bounds of civility, which I had a right to expect in return, or carried my remarks farther than was necessary for the refutation of error, and the removal of groundless imputations on those who can no longer defend themselves.

"To Mr. Bowles I am personally a stranger, but not so to his poetical works, which have justly entitled him to the appellation I have already given him of 'a favourite author;' and which title will be confirmed by his elegant and pathetic lines on Lord Byron, in his last publication. The opinion which I entertain of Mr. Bowles as a critic (with the exception of the various subjects in which we so materially disagree) may appear from my having in my edition of Pope availed myself of many interesting notes with which he has frequently illustrated the works of that author.

"In my present observations I have, as far as

I am aware, removed from myself every aspersion, however trivial, which Mr. Bowles has endeavoured to cast upon me. If I could have done this without exasperating his feelings in return, I should gladly have avoided such a step; but in literary as in national warfare, the terms offensive and defensive often become synonymous. I shall not, however, like Mr. Bowles, congratulate myself on my '*triumph*;' but shall leave it to the public, if the public should yet interest themselves in a contest which has subsisted for a century, to decide between us. To Mr. Bowles I need not observe, that more important avocations await us; and that it would be more advisable for each of us rather to attend to the correction of his own errors than to those of the other; by which means, I trust, we may yet meet, divested of malice and all other hostile feelings, in a happier and a better state,—

> 'Our tears, our little triumphs o'er,
> Our human passions now no more,
> Save charity, that glows beyond the tomb.'"

Though written after that period of life which the Psalmist has declared to be the limit of human existence, not even the most critical eye can discover, in the Life of Pope, any failure in the literary powers of the author. In particular, it may be remarked that the same ardour of sentiment on all the great topics of human

interest, which breathes through his other works, is expressed in these pages with all his former earnestness. The following parallel, with which the Life concludes, between the characters and writings of Pope and of Swift, is not inferior to the best passages in the Life of Lorenzo or of Leo. After noticing Sir Walter Scott's observations on the same subject, Mr. Roscoe proceeds; —

"But, although this estimate is perfectly correct as far as it extends, it by no means comprises the whole of the subject. Swift, in the prosecution of his views, launched forth into the turbulent ocean of party politics, when, notwithstanding his utmost efforts, he could not reach the desired port; and when he found that further struggles were vain, he turned his powerful talents to degrade and satirise those whom he could not render subservient to his wishes. Pope took a more general and, perhaps, a more enlightened view of human nature. His object was not the approbation of a party, but the admiration of his own and future ages. All his subjects are of universal comprehension and universal interest; and while Swift thought he was 'engaged in matters of much more momentous importance,' Pope well knew for what superstructure he was laying the foundation, and disregarded the works of the passing day, in the contemplation of those which were to last

through future times. Nor did he attempt to attain his purpose by the mere powers of eloquence or the blandishments of style. There is scarcely an object connected with the interests or happiness of society that has not been subjected to his inquiries, and illustrated by his genius. When we turn to the perusal of Swift we observe the workings of an original and vigorous mind, expending itself in objects of a temporary or local nature, or in dark and sombre pictures of the different relations of human life, in which we seldom sympathise, and from which we occasionally turn with disgust. Even his wit and his humour are often of so cynical a kind as to prevent our indulging ourselves in them, without something like self-reproach at the nature of our own feelings; whilst the writings of Pope, on the other hand, contain an inexhaustible fund of the most magnanimous and generous sentiments, the love of virtue, the delights of friendship, the value of independence, the indispensable duty of submission to the Divine will, the blessings derived from human society, and various other topics of the highest importance to our welfare, expressed in language which, whilst it convinces the judgment, touches the heart, and whilst it never tires on repetition, is calculated, more, perhaps, than that of any other author, to impress similar ideas and sentiments on the minds of millions yet to come."

About this period Mr. Roscoe lost one of his oldest friends in Fuseli. Their friendship originated in the year 1779, when, in company with Johnson the bookseller, Fuseli first visited Liverpool, and its strength was preserved by a frequent correspondence, and by the more agreeable mode of personal intercourse during their mutual visits to London and Liverpool. The learning, the wit, and the sensibility of Fuseli won the warm regard of his friend, who never omitted any opportunity of rendering those services to him in his profession, of which he often in early life stood in need. In the management of his affairs, as well as in his speculations as an artist, Fuseli always found a ready and zealous adviser in Mr. Roscoe, and his correspondence teems with expressions of warm acknowledgment for services of this nature. During the preparation of his "Milton Gallery," he communicated frequently with Mr. Roscoe on the subject, and received much encouragement from him. In a letter on the subject of his proposed exhibition, he says, "My heart longs to communicate its concerns to you; but this moment of uncertainty is not fit for it; only know, the die is cast, and I have taken Christie's room, formerly the old academy in Pall Mall, to which the largest of my pictures are already conveyed; but I want something more of your assistance, and till then my mouth must be shut. Let me not linger for an

answer." As his pencil proceeded with its task, he was anxious to have its labours celebrated by the pen of his friend. "You have flattered me by saying that my applause to your 'Chapter on Art' was the highest gratification on that point you could have received. I could certainly receive no higher one, than if your muse would dictate to *you* a few verses on my 'Milton;' but like those of ignorance, the expectations of ambition are indefinite; so forgive me the petulant wish." In another letter he recurs to the same subject. "O when will you come? If ever man had a claim on the exertions of a friend, I have on yours. Has the duchess* or the Palmers† monopolised your powers, and is poor 'Milton' to have nothing? *Laudari a laudato;* but even that praise is not worth having, unless it be founded on facts and truth. I venture to say, you have not seen half of what you now might, and I hope will see. To speak big, my nights are as restless as those of Themistocles. Though no trophies of a Miltiades perturb me, *Venit summa dies et ineluctabile tempus. Fuimus Troes* may, perhaps, be my doom. O say, when will you come to assist your Fuseli." The wishes of

* The Duchess of Devonshire, to whom Mr. Roscoe inscribed some verses in "The Nurse."

† The family of Palmer, the actor, for whose benefit Mr. Roscoe wrote an address.

the painter were at length gratified by a copy of verses from the pen of his friend.*

On the failure of his exhibition Fuseli addressed to Mr. Roscoe a letter full of his disappointment. "I shall not condole with you," says the latter in reply, "on the contents of your letter. That public which can bestow its admiration and its favours upon such productions as daily obtain them, can scarcely be expected to become active patrons of works of real genius. There is, however, no reason for despondency. If your works possess real merit, the neglect of the present day will only enhance that merit in the eyes of posterity. With respect to pecuniary concerns, you must not suppose that I have devoted myself to Mammon without securing some of his services in this world; and therefore, should your occasions require it, the sum you mention shall be forthcoming, at whatever time and in whatever way you think proper. When your exhibition closes, you may send me down your Richard, and some Miltonic pictures, which I will endeavour to sell, as occasion may offer; and in the mean time, I shall have the pleasure of seeing them, instead of interest for my money."

The talent and the lively temper of Fuseli are displayed in all his letters. The following, written in the year 1797, while he was employed

* See the Appendix to the "Life of Fuseli," p. 427.

on the "Milton Gallery," is in answer to an invitation to visit Liverpool:—

"The devil alone, at my back, bestriding the promontory of the fiery flood, can account for my silence. When Mr. Shepherd presented your friendly note, he found me wrestling with him; and I can but just now say that I have, I hope, got the better of him. Some other things have been done, indeed, in the mean time, when I wanted to recover breath, but still I wished not to write, till I could with decision, about him. All this, however, must be the subject of my next.

"I thank you for having made me acquainted with Shepherd. He is a man whom I think of as you do. I got as much of his company here as he thought proper to give me; we ate and drank together, but he went off without an adieu. If he was offended at my manner of pronouncing Greek verse, and confounding omicrons and omegas like Tros and Rutulus, I promise to make amends when we meet again. The infernal storm that inundates the street and bespatters my window whilst I am writing, equal to Dante's 'Pioggia maledetta eterna e greve,' confounding all season, and cloaking the face of day, makes it indeed totally indifferent what month I picked for travel, even to those who have only to please themselves in choosing. My intention was, if I do come, to choose the time

I can best spare—the twilight, the 'brindle' part of the year. As I come merely to see the face of my friends, the warm reflection of a genial fire is preferable to the watery, half-strangled beam of this month. But tell me, shall I come? Will it be my advantage to come? I must sacrifice time, and—you know what—what I have not now the spirit to talk about, and must reserve for my next. In a few days, at least in little more than a month, I shall be able to pronounce whether an exhibition will be in my power next year. The pleasure I feel in hearing your assurances of support, through the means of your friend, is not superior to the *caution* I use, and shall use, in applying for it."

During Mr. Roscoe's residence in London, in 1807, many of his evenings were passed with much delight in the society of Fuseli. In a letter congratulating him on his return for Liverpool, the latter anticipates the gratification of this intercourse:—

"I congratulate your town and the country at large on their choice, and the trust they have conferred on you; it is a favourable symptom of recovery from a long lethargy, or rather, a *callus* in politics and legislation, which hitherto have not left it a doubt, what station was the post of honour.

"That you have accepted of it may surprise those who know you not. *You* know, that at a

period like this, every man who has courage, energy, and independence, ought to listen to his country's voice, and direct or invigorate the public mind.

"To me it is an event more immediately grateful; for though I am sensible that your new station, with its duties and attendant connections, must too frequently interfere with our mutual intercourse, yet you will inhabit London during a considerable portion of the year, when it will be in my power repeatedly to bask in the sunshine of your face, and to tell you how much I am your—Fuseli."

The last visit which Mr. Roscoe made to London, in 1824, afforded him once more the gratification of meeting his friend, whose mental energies had in no degree suffered from the attacks of age. He died in the spring of the following year, after a short illness, attended with little suffering.

A few months before his own death, Mr. Roscoe received from Mr. Knowles, the biographer of Fuseli, a copy of his life; and in the following letter, after acknowledging the pleasure he had derived from the perusal of it, he says, "He was, indeed, a most extraordinary and accomplished person; and notwithstanding his eminence in his profession, it may be doubted whether this was the most interesting or the most valuable of his acquirements.

"As one of the oldest and most intimate of his acquaintances, I hope I may be permitted to say, that, in my opinion, you have given a very full and candid delineation of his character, in which he appears to considerable advantage. It would have given me great pleasure to have contributed some anecdotes and records of conversations between us during his frequent visits to me in Lancashire; but the very serious complaint, with which I have for some years past been visited, has deprived me of the power of accomplishing this purpose, which I greatly regret, as my information would have been chiefly directed to show the extreme humanity of his disposition and the sensibility of his mind,—qualities in which, from his general manner, he might, perhaps, by some persons have been thought wanting.

"I cannot conclude without returning you my best acknowledgments for the favourable light in which you have placed my conduct in the transactions with our late lamented friend, in whose society I have passed so many years of uninterrupted friendship and happiness."

Amongst the many excellent and intelligent persons whom Mr. Roscoe's correspondents in America occasionally did him the honour of introducing to his acquaintance, was Christopher Hughes, Esq., Chargé d'Affaires from the United States to the court of Brussels. During the

residence of this gentleman in the Netherlands, many letters passed between them; from one of which (dated the 12th November, 1826,) the following is an extract:—

"A very eminent literary personage of this country, and an old friend of mine (since the negotiations at Ghent in 1814), came to see me a few days ago. He looked over my books, and on seeing your supplemental work on Lorenzo the Magnificent, begged me to lend it to him, to show it to M. Odevaere, the celebrated historical painter of this country, at whose house my friend Mr. Cornellissen was lodging, and who, it appears, was employed in a great composition painting, founded on the conspiracy of the Pazzi and on your history. Of course I was delighted to lend the book for such a purpose, though I value it too much, as a present received from its illustrious author, to lend it on common occasions; but the present one was so completely in accordance with your known devotion to the arts, and, in fact, seemed to present so classic an opportunity of realising one of the noblest objects of your labours, that I felt as if I were serving you, and serving at the same time the republic of taste, in putting the work into the hands of the eminent artist, Odevaere, the spirited and worthy élève of David, who had the courage to pronounce a spirited éloge over the mortal remains of his gifted master, a few

weeks ago, on their translation to the monument, erected here, to the memory of David by his family.

"It seems that I have rendered to M. Odevaere a very great service, when I only hoped to be contributing to his literary enjoyment. He has acknowledged it by sending me the enclosed letter. It should have been sent to you the next day, had not a multitude of occupations prevented it. It would be defrauding you of your legitimate rights and gratifications, if this letter were kept in other hands.

"M. Odevaere is a most eminent painter, and is greatly patronised by the royal family here, as he was by Napoleon in Italy. His latest work, 'The Last Day at Missolonghi,' has gained him imperishable fame. So, my dear Sir, your enthusiastic friend and admirer is himself entitled to your respect for his own merits in his own beautiful pursuit and profesion."

The following is the letter of M. Odevaere referred to by Mr. Hughes: —

"Monsieur,

"Je vous remercie beaucoup du livre que vous avez bien voulu m'envoyer par notre ami commun, Mr. Cornellissen; outre que je ne connoissois pas ce dernier ouvrage du célèbre historien Roscoe, j'y ai trouvé à ma grande surprise un des matériaux les plus essentiels pour

le nouveau tableau que je vais commencer (l'assassinat de Laurent et de Julien de' Medicis); c'est-à-dire le portrait de mon principal personnage si bien gravé et si ressemblant.

" J'envie, Monsieur, le bonheur que vous avez d'être personellement lié avec Mr. Roscoe; j'ai lu et rélu vingt fois ses très-intéressants ouvrages sur Laurent, et sur son fils Leon X.; et il n'y a peut-être pas d'écrivain avec lequel j'eusse autant aimé d'être en relation qu'avec celui, qui, par un espèce de miracle, puisqu'il n'y est jamais allé, a si bien connu l'Italie, et en a parlé si dignement. Amants, tous deux, de la même maîtresse, nous eussions sans jalousie confondûs nos sentimens, et les heures que j'aurois pu passer avec Mr. Roscoe m'auroient parû délicieuses.

" Enthousiasmé comme je l'étois dès les premiers mois de mon arrivée à Florence, je cherchois de tous côtés les moyens de m'instruire à fond sur l'histoire, les arts, et la littérature de cette belle patrie des arts, lorsqu'un ami me prêta la vie de Laurent le Magnifique de Mr. Roscoe. Je dévorai ce livre, et je l'ai relu trois fois de suite.

" Il m'éclaira sur une foule de choses qui me rendirent et le livre et la ville plus intéressants de jour en jour: malheureusement l'ouvrage ne m'appartenant pas, il fallût à mon très-grand regret m'en séparer; mais je n'eus

plus de repos jusqu'à ce que je pus me procurer des exemplaires et du Leon X. et du Laurent. Il n'existoit à Florence que la contrefaçon de Basle, et pour surcroît de malheur, je ne trouvai qu'un exemplaire de la vie du Péricles Moderne, entièrement gâté par l'humidité. Je le saisis avec avidité, et depuis je l'ai presque appris par cœur.

" Il ne m'appartient pas de louer la forme de cet ouvrage, ayant trop peu de connaissances de la langue Anglaise, mais enfin je l'ai compris, bien compris, d'un bout à l'autre, et je regarde ce livre comme un des beaux monumens dont puissent se glorifier l'Angleterre, et l'Italie. Mr. Roscoe a dignement placé Laurent au rang qu'il doit occuper, et l'a vengé des indignes calomnies dont quelques historiens ont voulu le noircir.

" Je suis donc bien charmé, Monsieur, d'avoir la certitude que vous transmettrez à Mr. Roscoe le tribut d'admiration que je lui ai payé, sans avoir l'honneur de le connôitre personellement, depuis vingt ans; et je me plais à confesser que c'est lui qui m'a inspiré le sûjet de la Congiura de' Pazzi que je vais entreprendre; et que c'est sa narration fidèlement traduite qui servira de notice à mon tâbleau; heureux si quelque jour il était digne d'être multiplié par le burin, et que je puisse offrir le premier exemplaire de cette estampe à l'historien poëte.

"J'ai beaucoup de graces à rendre aussi, Monsieur, à Mr. Cornellissen, qui m'a procuré l'honneur de vous connôitre, et je vous prie de me permettre de cultiver autant qu'il sera en moi des relations si flatteuses pour moi.

"Monsieur, votre très-humble serviteur,

"J. ODEVAERE,

"Peintre, ancien pensionnaire de Napolćon à Rome, maintenant attaché à S. M. le Roi des Pays Bas, en qualité de peintre d'histoire."

"I cannot," says Mr. Roscoe, in a letter acknowledging the receipt of Mr. Hughes's letter and its enclosure,—"I cannot dissemble the pleasure I feel in having my writings connected in any degree with works of art, and productions of genius; such a commentary being in my estimation far beyond any thing which the cold commendation of criticism can ever bestow. It is on these occasions, where

"The pen and pencil bear an equal part,
And art reflects its images on art,

that both the one and the other are most highly gratified, and I cannot but consider the work of M. Odevaere as one of the greatest honours ever done to my history."

The health of Mr. Roscoe was considerably affected towards the close of the present year

(1825), insomuch that he was frequently prevented from pursuing his usual literary avocations. "Your most kind and welcome letter from Henbury Hill," he says in a letter to Sir J. E. Smith, dated 3d September, "should have been sooner acknowledged, had not continual interruptions, combined with a state of unaccountable indolence and debility, prevented me from turning my thoughts to any subjects but such as had irresistible claims on me, and from which I extricated myself the first moment it was in my power. If, in return for the narrative you have so kindly given me of your peregrinations and transactions since you left home, I should furnish you with mine for the same period, they would appear like the track of a snail compared to the flight of an eagle, or the journal of a pedlar to the history of some mighty traveller. You pass from county to county, visit your friends and take up your abode where you please, whilst I remain on the same spot without emigrating even from the blue bed to the brown, and whenever I am disturbed only exclaim, 'Let me, let me rest!'

"The only object that excited my exertion was the publication of my Monandrian Plants.

"When shall we meet again? For my own part I can only repeat, in my own words, that

> Hope strives in vain, through Futurity's gloom,
> To descry one bright moment in seasons to come;

yet I will not despair. In the uncertainty that attends this earthly state, in which we cannot foresee the consequence of placing one leg before another, I would gladly flatter myself that something may occur to draw us together again, and enable us to enjoy each other's society, if not with all the life and vivacity, with all the warmth and affection we ever experienced; which good wish I hope Lady Smith will not refuse to share."

For many years a new edition of his historical works had been contemplated by Mr. Roscoe, but, hitherto, the last impression of the 'Life of Leo' remained unexhausted. At length a reprint both of that work and of the 'Life of Lorenzo' being called for, he applied himself to this task with much pleasure. His labours, with regard to the latter work, were much lightened by his publication of the 'Illustrations,' in which he had entered at large into the various criticisms of the 'Life' which had appeared both at home and abroad. It was only necessary, therefore, in the new edition, to refer to that volume, which has thus become an indispensable companion to his historical works. With regard to the 'Life of Leo X.' the case was different. No edition of it had appeared in England for many years; and in the mean time translations of it had been published on the Continent, containing many valuable criticisms and illustrations, of which

the author was anxious to avail himself in the new impression of his work. The annotations of Count Bossi, the Italian translator, and of M. Henke, who edited the German version, contained many important remarks and much valuable information. The examination and selection of these notes occupied considerable time, but Mr. Roscoe conceived himself amply recompensed for his labour by the additional value which they conferred upon his work. Of the importance of these annotations he thus speaks in the preface to the new edition: —

"The notes and observations by which the before-mentioned translations, and particularly the German and Italian, are accompanied, are the productions of persons who have thought for themselves on the various subjects there discussed, and who have examined as well the general spirit and tendency of the work as the particular facts and circumstances which are there related. On this account, the present history has undergone an ordeal, to which few works of a similar nature have ever been subjected; and as the different annotators have not scrupled to bring forwards their objections on some occasions with the same freedom as they have stated the reasons of their assent on others, the author has found it incumbent on him, in giving the present edition (the last he will probably ever revise), to examine their remarks with diligence and impar-

tiality; and either to admit their validity, or to show the grounds of his adherence to his former opinions. The task he has thus undertaken is not only due to the labours of those who have devoted to the examination of his work so great a portion of their time and attention, but is, indeed, such as he could not in justice to himself avoid. Some of the subjects to which the beforementioned criticisms relate are, in his estimation, of the first importance to the character and credit of his work; and to have passed over such objections without a reply, would have amounted to no less than a confession of his inability to maintain his statements, or to defend his opinions. He hopes he shall, therefore, stand excused in referring so frequently to the remarks of the different translators of the present work, which he is happy to do, with those feelings which ought always to accompany a debate on literary subjects, and with that satisfaction which must naturally arise from finding that very few instances have occurred in which he has thought it incumbent on him to make any alteration in his narrative.

"In finally submitting this work to the indulgence of the public, in the form in which it is intended it should remain, it has not been thought necessary to republish the preface to the second edition; the only object of which was to vindicate the statements in the first edition, respect-

ing the date of a letter from Luther to Leo X., against the unfounded objections of the "Edinburgh Review." As that vindication has not been controverted, and as the evidence, as well external as internal, for the date assigned to the letter, will be found condensed in that part of the present work where the contents of it are noticed, it is presumed that the preface to the second edition may now be dispensed with."

In the new edition, which comprises the 'Life of Lorenzo' in two volumes (instead of three), and that of 'Leo' in four (instead of six), a great improvement was effected, by placing the documents contained in the appendix at the close of the particular volume to which they relate. The edition appeared in the early part of the year 1827.

While engaged in preparing his historical works for the press, Mr. Roscoe received from Italy a most gratifying and appropriate present—a new edition of 'The Poetical Works of Lorenzo de' Medici,' in four volumes, super-royal quarto, with annotations by the Grand Duke of Tuscany. A copy of this magnificent work, from the types of Bodoni, splendidly bound in morocco, was transmitted, by the desire of the Grand Duke, to Mr. Roscoe, of whose small collection of books it afterwards formed the most distinguished ornament, and was highly prized by him, not only for the beauty of the volumes, but for the care

and accuracy with which the poems are printed. The work had been contemplated and partly carried into execution by the Grand Duke before his accession, after which event he consigned it to the learning and taste of the Academy della Crusca, of which he was himself a member. No less than thirty-six manuscripts, and twenty-eight printed volumes of the works of Lorenzo, were consulted by the illustrious editor in the preparation of this edition. A short account of the work was transmitted by Mr. Roscoe to the Royal Society of Literature.

His acknowledgments were expressed to the individual through whose hands he received the volumes in the following terms:—

"Pregiatissimo Sign^re.

"Con indicibil piacere ho ricevuto per mezzo del Sigr. C. T. Molini di Londra, franco di tutte spese, un bellissimo esemplare delle 'Opere di Lorenzo de' Medici,' in 4 vol., carta reale, stampàte in Firenze, accompagnato dalla gentilissima lettera di V. S. Ill^a. del 7 di Luglio pros. pas. recandomi la gradita notizia che questi pregiatissimi volumi mi sono inviati in dono da parte di sua Altezza Imperiale e Reale il Gran Duca di Toscana—dono ch' io hò accettato colla più rispettosa gratitudine, come argomento piuttosto della generosità e grandezza d'animo di sua Altezza Imperiale e Reale, che de' miei deboli

meriti. Ad accrescere il mio piacere per l' onore conferitomi ho poi osservato le opere di questo grand' uomo che è stato, per lungo tempo l'oggetto della mia ammirazione e de' miei lavori, unite insieme, accresciute da molte pregiatissime aggiunte, ridotte a miglior lezione, e sopratutto corredate da sì luminose e giudiziose annotazione, dalle quali il testo è recato ad una perfezione che non lascia cosa alcuna da desiderare. Piaccia a V. S. Ill^a^. d'esprimere con tutto il rispetto, in mio nome, a sua Altezza Imperiale e Reale i miei più vivi ringraziamenti per la bontà colla quale s' è degnata d' onorarmi, e di credermi," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XX.

1827—1831.

Increasing infirmities of Mr. Roscoe.—Letter to Sir J. E. Smith.—Completion of the Holkham catalogue.—His remaining literary undertakings.—Is attacked with paralysis—causes of the attack.—Persists in preparing for the press his "Letters on Prison Discipline."—Mode of life after his attack.—Description of his study.—Sonnet to him.—His mode of employing his time.—Letter to Mr. Dawson Turner.—His warmth of feeling unchanged.—His feelings with regard to his own state.—His interest in political events:—repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts—Catholic emancipation—the Revolution of July.—His letter to La Fayette interceding for the French ministers.—Letter to Mr. Coke on the same subject.—Formation of Lord Grey's ministry, and letter to Mr. Brougham.—Completion of all his literary labours.—Publication of the last number of his "Monandrian Plants."—Opinions of celebrated botanists on that work.—Loss of his friends.—Death of Sir J. E. Smith.—His surviving friends:—Professor Smyth—the Rev. W. Shepherd.—Dedication by the latter, of his poems.—Mr. Panizzi.—Letter to Mr. Rogers.—Opinion of the "Life of Dr. Currie."—Projects a publication of his Poems.—Letter to Dr. Hosack of New York.—Letter to Rammohun Roy, and interview with him.—Letter to Lord Brougham.—Mr. Roscoe's last illness and death.

CHAPTER XX.

It seldom happens that persons whose lives have been devoted to active mental labours reach an extended age without a failure of their bodily health, too frequently accompanied with the loss of the high intellectual powers by which they have been distinguished; but this was not the case with Mr. Roscoe. He had, late in life, engaged in a variety of literary undertakings; which, notwithstanding the infirmities of age, and the temporary disabilities of sickness, he had prosecuted with such vigour, that the termination of his labours appeared near at hand, and he had now the prospect of enjoying that repose which had become so essential, not merely to his comfort, but to his health, and, indeed, to his very existence. He began at length to feel the pressure of years, not only in the failure of his bodily strength, but in the increasing difficulty of mental exertion. His intellect was, indeed, as unclouded as in its zenith; but the fatigue which literary studies occasioned had become painful and oppressive to

him. Under these feelings, he addressed the following letter to Sir James Smith :—

" I venture to address this to you at Holkham, where I hope you and Lady Smith are now enjoying the society of our excellent friends ; and where I deeply lament that my infirm health and increasing personal debility prevent me from being of the party. The time seems to be approaching, when I must possess my soul in patience, and not add to the unavoidable evils of life those which are the result of a fretful temper and ill regulated passions, happy if those evils be not increased by painful and distressing complaints, which, thanks be to God, have not hitherto been my lot. I am well aware, that the powers of my mind have in some degree partaken of the infirmities of my body, but not in such a degree as wholly to deter me from my usual studies and pursuits, although I can only devote to them a much smaller portion of time than formerly, and am some days obliged to abstain from them altogether. The consequence of this is, that I am endeavouring to bring them to a termination with all reasonable speed, being unwilling to leave to be terminated by others that which by my own efforts I may finish myself. I am now revising for the last time the Catalogue of the MSS. at Holkham, with Mr. Madden's numerous additions, which have more than doubled the size of the work. I have deter-

mined to close my "Monandrian Plants" in fifteen numbers; the three last of which are now nearly ready, and will, I hope, be published before the end of the year; and I am drawing my controversy with the Americans, as to their penitentiaries, which is now at its height, into a state in which I have no doubt we shall finally understand each other, and I shall be sufficiently repaid for my trouble by the good effects derived from it. The system I have there advocated is equally desirable in this country; but amidst our old institutions and inveterate prejudices, there would be little hope of taking the lead in carrying it into effect; whilst the facilities enjoyed by the American States, of each forming their own internal regulations, render them peculiarly suitable for mooting questions where experience alone can finally decide, and for setting the example to other nations who act in larger communities, and whose motions are consequently slower. I duly receive through the hands of my son Robert my descriptions of Monandrian Plants, and cannot sufficiently express the obligations I feel to you for the trouble you have taken in perusing them, and honouring them with your valuable remarks, of which I shall avail myself in what remains of my work."

The completion of the Catalogue of the Holkham manuscripts, mentioned in the foregoing

letter, was at this time the source of considerable anxiety to him. During the earlier part of his labours on this work, he had strongly recommended Mr. Coke to publish it, and various engravings had been made for the purpose of embellishing it. Finding, from the state of his health, that he was unable to perfect the Catalogue in the manner which he thought it merited, he procured the assistance of a gentleman highly skilled in similar studies, Frederick Madden, Esq. (now Sir Frederick Madden, and one of the librarians of the British Museum.) After a residence of many months at Holkham, Mr. Madden not only completed the Catalogue, by giving an account of the volumes not yet examined by Mr. Roscoe, but added very largely to every part of the work; so that instead of being comprised in one, or at the most two quarto volumes, it appeared that, if printed, it would extend to five or six. The publication of a work of this magnitude, the expence of which would have been enormous, had never entered into the contemplation of Mr. Roscoe; and he therefore thought it his duty to dissuade Mr. Coke from giving it to the public. In addressing the latter on this subject, he adds,— "Mr. Madden has executed his task with great learning, industry, and ability. He is now copying the whole in his own excellent handwriting; so that when it is finished, it may be bound in

as many volumes as it may require, and deposited in the library, where it will make an inconceivable addition to the value of the MSS., which he has described and illustrated in a manner highly creditable to himself, and useful to those who hereafter may have occasion to consult them. By this you will not only have preserved these precious volumes, and placed them in a situation worthy of them, but will have given them an additional value which it was wholly beyond my power to have conferred on them." The MS. of the Catalogue was subsequently sent to Mr. Roscoe at Liverpool, where, after it had been splendidly bound in the first style of art, he exhibited it at one of the meetings of the Literary and Philosophical Society previously to its being despatched to Holkham.

It might have been said of Mr. Roscoe at this time, in the words of Pope when speaking of the old age of Dryden, that "his fire, like the sun's, shined clearest towards its setting." The active duties of life were now nearly terminated. Not only had he retired from every kind of business, but he had at length, with much patient toil, accomplished the laborious literary tasks which necessity, and the desire of exerting himself while he was still able, had imposed upon his age. Nothing remained but to give the per-

fecting hand to that magnificent botanical work, the preparation of which had been his delight for many years, and to conclude his correspondence with America on the subject of penal jurisprudence. These labours completed, he might reasonably trust that, should his life be yet spared, the few remaining years of it might be passed in enjoying the society of his family, and in those never-failing pleasures which the resources of his own cultivated intellect afforded. Hitherto his health was such as to permit him to enjoy occasionally the conversation of a few attached friends; while the absence of pain and of any serious complaint induced his family to hope, that, at the close of his long and anxious life, some calmer and happier days awaited him.

It was at this period, when those who loved him were congratulating themselves on the happiness and serenity of his decline, when, with the labours of his hands finished, and some of the first hopes of his heart accomplished, he was sitting down to pass, as he hoped in peace, the short remainder of his life, — it was at this period that a calamity overtook him, which at first threatened to destroy all the hopes of his family and of his friends, and to render the remnant of his existence a scene of suffering and distress. On Sunday, the 16th December, 1827, while he was engaged in conversation with one

of his sons, the latter, observing him hesitate in his speech, was shocked to find that he had been suddenly attacked with paralysis, which had considerably affected one side of his face. He was not himself at first aware of the nature of the seizure, till, on attempting to use his right hand, he found that it refused to obey him, — most fortunately his mind did not appear to be in any degree affected.

Prompt medical assistance was obtained, and he submitted to be copiously bled, an operation to which he had some aversion, and which he had not undergone since his youth. The judicious treatment to which he was subjected soon produced a beneficial effect; and in the course of a few days the use of his hand was restored to him.*

* The following is the account given by his excellent medical friend, Dr. Traill, of this attack: — "My acquaintance with Mr. Roscoe commenced in 1806, and I had soon the felicity of being received as an intimate friend. From 1810 I was further honoured by being consulted as his physician, in which capacity I watched with much anxiety over his declining health. From the time of the first derangement of the affairs of the bank, the immense mental and bodily exertions which he made produced great inroads on a constitution naturally good. He then began, on much application to any subject, to be seized with occasional faintness; and once, in 1816, he was attacked at the bank with a slight loss of memory, which speedily wore off. His habits of intense study, after this period, produced similar effects; and whilst engaged in the controversy on prison discipline, after writing

A tendency to this complaint had existed for many years. A loss of memory and a difficulty in enunciating, which occasionally occurred after he had been much engaged in mental labour, were symptoms which gave uneasiness to his family, but which were only regarded by himself as slight nervous attacks. The severe mental labours, too heavy for his age, in which he had been long engaged, contributed to increase the disposition to this attack; while the high degree of excited interest felt by him with regard to his controversy on prison discipline operated most unfavourably on his health. The latter may especially be said to have been the immediate cause of his attack.

It not unfrequently happens in the case of persons who, in the decline of life, have the misfortune to suffer from paralysis, that the temper becomes irritable and morose, and that the blighted remnant of their life is rendered a scene of misery only to be terminated by death. From

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for the greatest part of a night, to overtake a ship about to sail for America, he was affected in the winter of 1827 with partial paralysis of the muscles of the mouth and tongue. I was immediately called in: the patient was freely bled, on which he recovered his speech; and the introduction of a seton in his neck removed the paralytic affection of the mouth. Intense study was forbidden; and after a period of perfect relaxation from his literary occupations, he recovered sufficiently to be able to complete his botanical work," &c.—*Dr. Traill's Memoir.*

this fate not even the firmest minds or the sweetest dispositions are exempt; and the prostration of the intellect is only rendered more striking by the recollection of its former strength and splendour. It was the blessing bestowed upon the latter days of Mr. Roscoe that he was saved from this last and most pitiable of human misfortunes, and that the powers of his mind and the dispositions of his heart were fully preserved to him to the last.

It unfortunately happened that, at the time of his attack, he was engaged in preparing for the press the "Letters to Mr. Stephen Allen of New York" (which have been already mentioned) on the subject of the American system of prison discipline. So deeply had his feelings become interested in this discussion, that notwithstanding his illness, and in despite of the injunctions of his medical attendants, and the entreaties of his family, he persisted in the publication of the "Letters," which were read to him by one of his sons, and received his alterations and amendments previously to their being sent to the press. So occupied was his mind with the subject, and so deeply was he persuaded of its importance, that, even at the imminent chance of inducing a second attack, he thought it his duty, at all hazards, to complete what might perhaps be his last contribution to the cause of human improvement.

The discipline which his state of health required produced a considerable change in his mode of life. His diet was restricted; he was ordered to abstain altogether from the use of wine; and he was confined for some months to his bed-room, and to the sitting-room adjoining it. The latter apartment was one which he had fitted up for his own use, and which bore in every part of it the marks of his peculiar tastes. Near the easy chair in which he was accustomed to sit stood an ornamented pedestal, the inside of which was fitted up with shelves, containing the various works which he had used in preparing the "Life of Pope." On the pedestal rested a statue of Psyche, modelled by Gibson, before his departure for Rome, and presented by him to Mr. Roscoe. At the end of the room were two bookcases, containing the remnant of his library, almost entirely consisting of presentation copies; and between these cases, a number of shelves, placed in the recess of a window which had been closed up, held the collection of his own works, with the translations and editions of them which had appeared abroad. The publications which had proceeded from various members of his own family were also honoured with a place on these shelves. On each side of the fire-place stood an ebony cabinet, manufactured from wood presented to him by one of his sons, and containing a few drawings and prints, chiefly the

portraits of his friends, together with the drawings belonging to his botanical work. Behind the folding-screen, which sheltered the couch* on which he usually reposed in an afternoon, stood another cabinet, which contained his manuscripts and correspondence. A large library table, covered with books and prints, and bearing almost constantly some rare exotic plants, which the kind attentions of his friends placed there, occupied a considerable portion of the room. The walls were appropriately decorated with a collection of small pictures, which had formerly been in the possession of the celebrated Paulus Jovius, and which consisted of portraits of the most distinguished men of the Medicean age. A few busts, which had been presented to him, of Mr. Fox, of Sir James Smith, and of Dr. Darwin, together with a magnificent head of

* "O! hallow'd be the couch on which repose
That head of reverend beauty, that dim frame!
For deeper love, more holy honour claim
These precious moments of thy day's pure close,
Whose calm a blessed stillness round thee throws,
Than when in all thy noontide hour of fame,
Learning and Freedom hail'd thy virtuous name,
Which with untainted radiance ever glows.
High hours, enchanted by the Muse, have pass'd
In those forsaken halls, yet loved as thine;
And secret spells a charmed influence cast
Around thy hearth, and did those hearts refine,
Which now with graceful rites and sacred haste,
Honouring thine age, all coarser cares resign.
"E. M.—1828."

Lorenzo, (a cast from the original by Michel Agnolo, presented to Mr. Roscoe by the Marquis Capponi of Florence,) also adorned the walls. Over the chimney-piece, which held a small collection of Etruscan vases and lamps, were two basso relievos, —one a figure of Justice, by Deare, and another by Gibson, representing Alexander depositing the works of Homer in a golden chest. From the window a small plot of garden ground was visible, in the cultivation and ornamenting of which he took the greatest delight.

In this pleasant scene his latter days were passed with a serenity and cheerfulness which neither age nor sickness could overcloud. Relieved from all compulsory studies, he amused himself with turning over the leaves of his books, rather than in studying them, and in replying to the letters of the very few friends with whom he was still able to keep up some correspondence. For many months he found a delightful employment in illustrating, with the heads of the painters, and with the engravings of their works, "The History of Painting in Italy," by the Abbate Lanzi, which had been translated into English by one of his sons. The large paper copy of this work, which he thus illustrated, forms a beautiful memorial of the taste which did not desert him even in his latest days.*

* In the closing years of his life he bore testimony, in a very delightful manner, to the truth of the sentiment contained

In the following extract from a letter to Mr. Dawson Turner, Mr. Roscoe has given a picture of his own situation, when in some degree recovered from the consequences of his alarming attack: —

"If I have been too long silent, I hope it will be attributed to its true cause, an inability to keep up my usual correspondence. At the same time, I am happy to say that my health appears to be somewhat better than when I had last the pleasure of seeing you here; that I am no longer troubled with continual noises in my head; that my pulse is remarkably equal; my appetite good, and my sleep tranquil. That I do not seem to improve in strength is not surprising in a person in his seventy-eighth year; but situated as I am, in the midst of my family and friends, and surrounded by my books, &c. (the shadows of my former collections), I still continue to enjoy as much happiness as usually falls to the lot of human

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in the following passage, written by himself upwards of forty years previously: — "A mind that can relish the pleasures afforded by the works of nature, of fancy, and of art, may be said in a great degree to originate its own happiness; there being scarcely a situation in which it can be placed which is not productive of enjoyment. In company, or alone; in the country, or in the town; in the splendour of noon, or the solemn gloom of midnight, a thousand images pass in succession before it; and interesting, by turns, all its faculties, desires, and affections, banish that listlessness and inactivity which render life a burden, and which all other methods will be found insufficient to repel."— *The Recluse*, No. V.

nature, and, being in a great degree free from acute pain, am truly thankful to Providence for the indulgence I have so long experienced."

It has been said by one of our most celebrated authors, that "life, after the first warm heats are over, is all down-hill." In many cases this assertion is but too correct; and we see the generous sentiments, the high tone of feeling, and the benevolent dispositions of youth, yielding gradually to the influence of the world, and chilled, if not destroyed, by the coldness of age. It was a remarkable and a most happy feature of Mr. Roscoe's character, that he retained throughout life the warmth of feeling, the animating views of human nature, and the benevolent purposes, which had distinguished his early years; and that he never, under the pressure of misfortunes or the weight of years, lost his lively sympathy in the welfare of others. Even his sensibility to the beauties of poetry remained unimpaired to the last, and indeed acquired additional strength by that tenderness of mind which sickness and ill health induce. But this susceptibility of feeling was unattended with any thing like depression; and there probably never was a period of his life when his spirits were more uniformly cheerful than the three last years of it, during which he was awaiting its close.

The prospect of that change, which, even in the common course of nature, was impending,

and which on any fresh attack of his complaint might at any moment take place, never appeared to produce in his mind the smallest degree of apprehension, or even uneasiness. He frequently spoke of the probability of his approaching death, not with fortitude, for that implies an exertion of mind, but with that perfect and resigned tranquillity which proceeds from an undisturbed heart. On many occasions, when, in consequence of the debilitated state to which he had been reduced, he was affected with a distressing faintness, his own impression was that he was dying; but not even then did he exhibit any feelings of alarm or distress. It is, probably, to the great tranquillity of mind which he maintained throughout the whole of his illness, that his partial recovery is to be attributed, and that he was yet spared to see some happy days.*

Permanently confined though he now was, both by the infirmities of age and the effects of sickness, to the narrow limits of his study, his mind was yet actively alive to those great subjects of

* "It has served to convince me that pain and sickness, the prospect of a speedy deprivation of the enjoyments of life, and the near approach of death itself, are not objects of terror to a well regulated and blameless mind; and that, amidst all the evils and misfortunes to which our nature is incident, it is yet in our power, by a life of innocence and virtue, to secure to ourselves that consolation and peace of mind which will blunt the stings of pain, and throw a gleam of joy even on the dark precincts of the grave."— *The Recluse*, No. XI.

national interest in which no period of his life had been more fertile than the present. He had now the happiness of seeing the fruit of that good seed which he and others had sown in times of danger and distrust. He had witnessed the removal of those unjust restrictions which had debarred the Dissenters from serving the public in posts of honour and emolument; and he enjoyed the high gratification of finding this great work of justice followed up by the abolition of those disabilities under which the Catholics had so long laboured. In the House of Commons, and in every other place where his voice could have effect, he had advocated the claims of the Catholics; and it was with the deepest interest that he read the debates upon the bill which restored to them their full rights as citizens. The privilege of witnessing, in these great events, the accomplishment of views cherished through a long life, was esteemed by him the highest reward of his labours.

In the summer of the year 1830 an event took place on the Continent which excited, in the highest degree, his sympathy and interest. The Revolution of July, which once more freed the French nation from the heavy yoke that had oppressed them, seemed to waken in their freshness all the feelings of his youth; and those of his family who witnessed the powerful emotions which the narrative of these transactions pro-

duced, dreaded their effects upon a frame debilitated by age and sickness. He regarded this event as the establishment, at length, of rational liberty in France, and as a compensation for the miseries which that unhappy country had experienced in her former attempts at freedom, repeatedly expressing his thankfulness that he had thus been spared to witness this realisation of his early hopes. His feelings on this occasion may be gathered from the following letter, written on the 5th of August: —

"I cannot allow the small space which my daughter has left me to remain totally unoccupied, particularly as I think you may wish to know my opinions and feelings on the astonishing events which have occurred in France since you left us. They strongly remind me of the tremendous events of the last century, but are attended with better hopes and expectations. In fact, this is the first time that I can console myself with the idea, that the cause of liberty and justice has been truly successful, the former contests being, like those of two wild beasts, intended to decide which of them should devour the people; but the present noble and spontaneous expression is of a moral character, and an incident not only unparalleled in history, but an entire compensation (if any thing can be a compensation) for the dreadful loss of human life with which it has been accompanied. I dare not

indulge in speculations upon the probable consequences of this great event, but it is highly satisfactory to me to reflect that, as this struggle was certain to occur, sooner or later, I have lived to see it decided according to my most earnest wishes, and shall find it an additional cause to take my departure with thankfulness whenever I shall be called upon."

Nothing in the course of these transactions excited so warmly the admiration of Mr. Roscoe, as the forbearance manifested by the people of France towards the members of that family who had again forfeited the crown by their folly and wickedness. On the apprehension of the ministers he was anxious to see the same magnanimous line of conduct adopted towards them, and he deprecated the idea of their blood being shed, even for the heinous offence of which they had been guilty towards their country. He thought that it became the French nation to exhibit, in this instance, an example of mercy and moderation to the rest of Europe; and to show that, while despotic sovereigns are compelled to guard their power by measures of severity and cruelty, a great and a free people can afford to be magnanimous and merciful. So strongly were these sentiments impressed upon his mind, that he resolved, without delay, to address a representation to M. La Fayette, whose friendship for him might induce him, at all events, to listen to the

appeal, and whose influence might possibly be favourably exerted in giving it effect. Neither by day nor by night was the subject absent from his mind until he had despatched to Paris the following letter: —

"I have just had the pleasure of receiving your obliging favour of the 18th May last, introducing to my acquaintance the Rev. Dr. Kirkland and his highly accomplished lady, with whom I have just spent a very pleasant hour in my library, and have been much gratified with the accounts they have given me of their travels on the Continent. But, my dear Sir, I can speak on no other subject till I have returned my earnest thanks to God, and congratulated you on the wonderful events which have taken place in France since your letter was written, and in which you have yourself acted so noble a part — an incident on which I may truly say, '*Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace.*' This, indeed, is the first time in my life, although I am now fast approaching the eightieth year of my age, when I have seen the triumph of liberty complete, and a foundation laid for the perpetual extirpation of slavery and oppression from every part of the civilised world.

"On occasions of this kind the chief difficulty is to prevent the great objects so happily accomplished from being defeated by too violent a re-

action. Well do I remember how deeply I lamented the overthrow of all my hopes in the early part of the former revolution, when the most precious blood of France was poured out on the scaffold; and now my chief object of anxiety is that the French nation may finish, with magnanimity and humanity, the glorious work it has so well begun. I allude to the situation of the wretched individuals who have been the cause of all this commotion, and who are deeply stained with the blood of their fellow citizens, but to whose criminal yet fortunate temerity it is owing, that France is free. Will she require their blood in return? I hope not. I should be sorry to see the same unsparing maxims acted upon by a free government, as have, in all ages, characterised despotic monarchies, to whom the *ultima linea rerum* is always at hand. But it is time that Europe should change its maxims, and that an example should be given which should not derogate from the character that France has already obtained, and show that a better era is opened upon society. What! I may perhaps be asked, would you suffer these traitors to their country to go unpunished? By no means. But I would punish them in a manner more consistent with the character of a great nation, which has nothing to fear, than by depriving them of life. Let them be made to feel their folly and their guilt,

and not only let their estates and property be confiscated, but let them be for ever banished from the pleasant land of France. At the same time, condemn not the innocent with the guilty; but follow up the mercy shown to the late monarch of France, by making a suitable provision for the innocent and unhappy relatives of the offending parties. Thus would the ends of justice be answered, and an example be set to the world which would be the admiration of all future ages, and confirm the character of France, by an act of lenity consistent with the greatness she has already exhibited, and the security she feels in the union of her people.

" An attack of paralysis, which I experienced upwards of two years ago, has prevented my joining my friends and fellow townsmen at a public meeting a few days since, to celebrate the late glorious event in France, and to subscribe towards the sufferings of the heroes who have bled in her cause, when your name was referred to in a manner which the occasion required. All the world acknowledges that you have confirmed, in your later years, those principles of liberty to which you were so generously and so early devoted in youth. I will send you one of our Liverpool Journals, by which you will see what occurred. I am truly happy to say that such meetings are taking place in all the large towns of the kingdom.

"It is not unknown to my friends here that I have the honour of corresponding with you; in consequence of which some of them, who form a society here, under the name of the Anti-slavery Society, of which I have been president many years, met together yesterday, and have to-day favoured me with a copy of a resolution adopted by them, which they have desired I would send to you; which I now do in compliance with their wish. It is expressed in the following terms:—

"'Resolution passed unanimously by the Liverpool Anti-slavery Society, William Roscoe, President. In his absence, James Cropper, Esq., in the Chair.

"'That the president be respectfully requested to write to General La Fayette, soliciting his powerful influence with the French government to enforce the laws against the slave trade, and to bring forward others, if those already existing are not sufficient to abolish this dreadful blot on humanity.'

"I presume you have heard that the legislators of Pennsylvania, after having erected two immense penitentiaries, intended to contain convicts to be punished by solitary confinement, both by day and night, without being permitted to labour, have thought proper, on the recom-

mendation of three commissioners from their own body, to change their plan, and to allow them to work during the day at some useful and productive employment.

"I will take an early opportunity of sending you a description of one of these penitentiaries, with a copy of the Report alluded to, which you possibly may not yet have seen; and I am glad to be able to add, that the system of productive labour for criminals is now the general practice of all the United States of North America."

In a letter to Mr. Coke he thus touches on the same subject: —

"I can scarcely express to you how sincerely I rejoice with you on the great triumph which has just taken place in France, where the victories of an age have been comprised within the compass of a few days, and a foundation laid for a better system of things than I ever expected to live to see. I have already written to congratulate my friend, General La Fayette, on this most happy event, in which he has acted so important a part, and have taken an opportunity of saying a few words to stay the violence of that reaction which destroyed the good effects of the last revolution, and to induce the present government to terminate the contest, as it was begun, with magnanimity and humanity. That the ex-ministers are deserving of death I by no

means deny, but the question is not merely what they deserve, but what punishment it becomes a great nation, which has just conquered its liberties, to inflict, and I wish to see the new government signalise itself by an act of lenity which should place it in contrast with the despotic governments of Europe; and, whilst we daily hear of massacres committed by the trembling tyrants of Naples, Spain, and Portugal, should show that the French can afford to spare the lives of those who have been the authors of the dreadful events which have taken place. At the same time, I would by no means suffer these great culprits to escape without punishment, but would confiscate their estates, and banish them for ever from France — to Frenchmen a heavier punishment than depriving them of life."

The event proved that, in suggesting this humane and high-minded course of conduct, Mr. Roscoe had not miscalculated the character of the new government. The ministers were tried and found guilty, but, notwithstanding the furious opposition of the populace, their lives were spared. What impression his representations produced on the mind of M. La Fayette he never learned, nor indeed did he expect that the sentiments of that distinguished person on a subject of so much delicacy and importance should be disclosed, even in the confidence of private friendship. It was enough for him that the

great object of his wishes had been accomplished, and that he had himself contributed to it as far as was in his power, by making the effort which his heart and his judgment dictated.

On the formation of Lord Grey's ministry Mr. Roscoe looked forward with eagerness to the accomplishment of the great improvements which had long been the objects of his political exertions. In the projected measure of Parliamentary Reform he more especially rejoiced, regarding that question as one of the most vital that could engage the attention of the legislature and of the public. From the elevation of his friend Mr. Brougham, also, to a station of such high rank and influence, he anticipated the most happy results, and he addressed to him, soon after that event, the following letter: —

"Although I have not yet made my appearance amongst the fifteen hundred friends, who (as I understand from the daily papers) have already congratulated your Lordship on your having attained the highest honours of your profession, you will, I am sure, do me the justice to believe that there is no person who rejoices more sincerely in that event, or who looks forward to the result of it with greater expectation than I do.

"That one, who has hitherto unceasingly devoted himself to the greatest and most generous pursuits, should be placed in a situation where the greatest facilities are afforded for benefiting

mankind, is so rare and so happy a coincidence, that it is impossible not to indulge the most favourable anticipations from it. That your Lordship may long live to enjoy the delight which I well know you feel in doing good to others, as far as even that elevated and honourable station will permit, will always be amongst the most earnest of my wishes.

"My attention was recalled a few days ago to the period of our more frequent intercourse, by the receipt of a small pamphlet from Mr. George Forwood, who is now stipendiary superintendant of the poor in Liverpool. This pamphlet is upon the subject which now occupies the entire attention of the nation,—the extension of suffrage,—and is written (as he tells me in a note) for the purpose of exemplifying one of the principles upon which (in my letter to you, addressed to you now upwards of twenty years ago) I proposed my plan of reform;—namely, 'to extend the right of voting to all, who, as householders, are heads of families, and, contribute to the exigencies of the state; as well as to some others of the community.'

"As the pamphlet just sent me enters somewhat more particularly into the subject, and as the author has requested that, if I should think favourably of his attempt, I would bring it more immediately under your notice, I have sent your Lordship a copy of it; not doubting that all

information on so important a subject, and particularly that derived from practical men, will be received by you with your usual indulgence.

"A few of my friends here having thought proper, on the present occasion, to republish my letter on Reform, addressed to your Lordship in the year 1810, I venture to trouble you with two copies of it; and as I do not recollect, at this distance of time, whether I ever gave you a copy of my neighbour Mr. Merritt's letter to me on that subject, and of my answer to him, I also send copies of each of these, — and am on all occasions, with the sincerest respect and attachment, my dear Lord," &c. &c.

Most of the laborious literary undertakings in which Mr. Roscoe had engaged, at a period of life which in most men is necessarily devoted to repose, were now happily concluded; and he was enabled to look back upon them with that satisfaction which may be allowed to attend the completion of long and useful labours. Notwithstanding a dangerous and often incapacitating illness, he had persisted in the task to which his mind had been previously devoted, and he was now rewarded for this painful exertion by attaining that undisturbed and needful repose which his age and his infirmities required. The following letter to Mr. Coke contains the pleasing retrospect of labours completed, and the happy picture of a contented spirit: —

"I was never more delighted than by your last letter, expressing in so kind and affectionate a manner your approbation of my labours in arranging your manuscript library at Holkham, or, rather, of the time I have spent in a most pleasing and instructive employment.

"Of the various works which I have of late undertaken, and which, to say the truth, have been rather too much for my latter years, I have great reason to be thankful that I have been able to bring them so near to a termination, that I have now some hope of seeing them all accomplished. The catalogue of the Holkham MSS. being deposited in the shelves of the library, and having received your kind and friendly approbation, I now consider as complete. The edition of Pope, a work of great labour, has now been finished for some years; and although it has been much abused by those whom it justly censured, I have received the approbation of all whose good opinion is worth having. My tracts on prison discipline, particularly as far as regards America, you will be happy to hear, have been attended with all the effect I could reasonably have expected; the system of solitary confinement, without labour, for which prisons were built at Philadelphia, and others were extending over the United States, having been rejected, and the opinions of M. La Fayette and myself having been referred to in express terms in the report of

their legislatures, and of the Society for prison discipline; so that I consider my works on that subject as terminated. The publication of new editions of the lives of Lorenzo de' Medici and Leo X., in which I have reviewed the remarks of my Italian and German translators, employed a great portion of my time, and placed those works in a form in which I wish them to remain. In short, I have nothing that remains on hand, but my botanical work, of which the prints are all published, and of which I hope, in the course of this year, to publish an additional number, which will complete the letter-press and finish the volume."

Within a few months after this time, he was enabled to send to the press the *fifteenth* and last number of his work on Monandrian Plants. In completing this splendid volume, he gave a proof of the undiminished powers of his mind, by prefixing to it the following poetical inscription:—

"God of the changeful year!—amidst the glow
Of strength and beauty, and transcendant grace,
Which, on the mountain heights, or deep below,
In shelter'd vales, and each sequestered place,
Thy forms of vegetable life assume,
—Whether thy pines, with giant arms display'd,
Brave the cold north, or, wrapt in eastern gloom,
Thy trackless forests sweep, a world of shade;
Or whether, scenting ocean's heaving breast,
Thy odoriferous isles innumerous rise;
Or, under various lighter forms imprest,
Of fruits, and flowers, thy works delight our eyes;—
God of all life! whate'er those forms may be,
O! may they all unite in praising Thee!"

Many of the scientific friends to whose assistance Mr. Roscoe was indebted during the progress of the work communicated their congratulations to him on its termination. From Dr. Hooker of Glasgow, whose high scientific acquirements are so well known to the public, he had the satisfaction of receiving the following letter: —

"Our friend Mr. Shepherd leaves Glasgow to-day, and I am anxious to charge him with a few lines to you, though only to congratulate you, as I do most cordially, upon the completion of your great work on the scitamineous plants. It is, indeed, a national work. My copy came home from the binder last night, with the plates all arranged according to your synoptical table, and I cannot tell you with what pleasure I again looked it through. I am much gratified at the kind and handsome manner in which you have mentioned my name. Of all the work, however, I am not sure if the lines which stand in lieu of a dedication, do not please me the very best.

"I am glad to hear from Mr. Shepherd that your bodily health continues as good as your friends could expect, though I lamented to hear that you still, as when I had last the happiness of seeing you, suffered from weakness."

Dr. Maton also, whose correspondence had afforded Mr. Roscoe much pleasure and information, thus expresses himself with regard to the work: —

"Having lately perused the last part of your excellent and splendid work on the Scitamineæ, I am anxious to convey to you my cordial acknowledgments for the very flattering manner in which you have been pleased to make mention of me in your remarks on the *Cardamom* plant. To be spoken of as the friend of Mr. Roscoe, and to receive his approbation of any humble endeavours of mine in the paths of science, will be ever a subject of pride and satisfaction to me."

But the person whose approbation Mr. Roscoe was most anxious to receive was Dr. Wallich, whose intimate acquaintance with the tribe of plants figured in the work, and whose celebrity as a botanist rendered his opinion of the highest value. That approbation was conveyed in the following letter, accompanied by the warmest expressions of friendship: —

"God be thanked for having enabled you to finish successfully the arduous but noble and classical work on Scitamineæ, on which you have been so long engaged, and which must have required the most vigorous exertions of the mind, especially under the severe bodily sufferings which you have of late years undergone. I beg to offer my sincerest felicitations on the consummation of this anxiously looked for event, which will be hailed by all sound botanists of the Linnæan as well as the modern school, and

which will add fresh and unfading laurels to a name already immortalised. Your work, my very dear Sir, will be referred to and studied, when many a one of modern growth, with high sounding titles and strong pretensions, has passed away like things that were intended only for an ephemeral existence. I had the happiness to receive the fifteenth number on the 6th inst., in the evening, and you may easily imagine with what eagerness I have read it through, not once, but several times. You have, in my humble opinion, taken a most luminous and perspicuous view of each genus of that extraordinary tribe, and you have left very little work for future labourers on the Scitaminean field; and at best they will be able to do little more, and nothing better, than to follow your *vestigia pressis pedibus.*"

* * * *

"Your charming sonnet I know by heart; and am charged by Mrs. Wallich to thank you a thousand times in our joint names for the honour you have done us both by inscribing a separate copy to her; an honour that we acknowledge with warm gratitude. We are going to have it framed against our return to India, where, in the botanic garden at Calcutta, it will have a place among our dearest and most valued friends.

* * * *

"I do glory and pride myself, as most justly I may, in all the generous expressions with which you have honoured me, and in the frequent mention of my humble name, especially in conjunction with those of my munificent masters. Your approbation and satisfaction is of indescribable value to me; to have had the distinction of being numbered amongst *your friends*, will always be to me a source of solid and substantial benefit, and will preserve me from that oblivion which would otherwise befal me when I shall only be a shadow — a name."

Mr. Roscoe might now almost be said to be *ultimus suorum*. He had survived not only the companions of his youth, but most of the friends of his maturer years. More than half a century had elapsed since he had lost Holden and Rigby, the associates of his youthful studies, and half that portion of time since the grave had closed over the remains of Currie and of Clarke. Their loss had been followed, at no distant period, by that of his beloved friend, Mr. Rathbone; and in later years he had to lament the deaths of many of his most esteemed correspondents — of Dr. Parr, of Dr. Aikin, and of Fuseli; another was now to be added to the list.

The friendship between Sir James Smith and Mr. Roscoe was not formed until after the middle period of life, but it was accompanied by all the warmth of youthful feeling. The admi-

ration with which, before their personal acquaintance, Mr. Roscoe regarded the high scientific acquirements of Dr. Smith is expressed at the conclusion of the address delivered by him previously to the opening of the botanic garden at Liverpool. "In the course of a few weeks it is in the contemplation of the committee to open the garden for public use, and I cannot but congratulate the proprietors, that about the same time the very eminent and learned Dr. Smith, president of the Linnæan Society, on the requisition of a considerable number of gentlemen, has consented to deliver his public instructions in this town on the science of botany, when the slight and unskilful remarks with which I have on this occasion had the presumption to trouble you, will be compensated by a full display of that knowledge, the joint result of genius, opportunity, and application, which has deservedly placed this illustrious disciple of Linnæus at the head of the first botanical institution in the kingdom."

The pleasure derived by Mr. Roscoe from a personal acquaintance with Sir James Smith, has been already adverted to. From the period of their first acquaintance to the death of the latter, a frequent correspondence was maintained between them, relating chiefly to scientific subjects, but often touching upon other matters of public and of personal interest. Of this cor-

respondence a considerable portion has appeared in the interesting memoirs of her husband lately published by Lady Smith, who has described Mr. Roscoe as "the individual round whom Sir James's pride and his affection equally rallied."*

Though the health of Sir James Smith had been for some time declining, his death was unexpectedly sudden, and the intelligence of it, for which Mr. Roscoe was unprepared, considerably affected him. He was just about to express in the preface to his "Monandrian Plants," the affectionate regard and high esteem which he entertained for his friend — expressions destined never to meet his eye. "I cannot," he says in the preface, "dismiss the present publication without expressing my obligations for many favours conferred on me. Of the pleasure I should have had in performing this duty, I have, however, in one instance, been deprived by the lamented death of that great promoter of botanical science, Sir James Edward Smith, president of the Linnæan Society, with whom I have enjoyed many years of literary communion and unbroken friendship, the memory of which will never be effaced from my mind; an event which has occurred precisely at the period when I should have had an opportunity of expressing my obligations to him for his numerous and

* Vol. ii. p. 306.

valuable suggestions to me in the course of my present undertaking, but which I rejoice to reflect did not happen till he had been enabled to terminate his great work, the 'English Flora;' a work which has perfected the system of English botany as far as present discoveries admit, and has, together with his other learned writings, conferred upon its author a name and station which will remain pre-eminent as long as the science itself exists."

In a letter to Lady Smith, written immediately after the distressing intelligence of Sir James's death had been communicated to him, he says,—"This great and irreparable loss I, too, must remember as one of the weightiest misfortunes of my life; for though I was sensible that the health of my dear friend was precarious, yet I had flattered myself that being younger by so many years than myself, I should have left him my survivor. I cannot, however, but rejoice in his calm and happy departure, his great worth fully understood, his fame established, and his most valuable work just finished. When I consider these circumstances, together with his pure and pious mind, I cannot repine at the result, and if it were not presumptuous, I would express an earnest wish that my latter day might be like his."

Although Mr. Roscoe had been deprived of many of those literary friends and associates

whose correspondence and whose society had been a source of so much pleasure to him, a few were still spared to him whose friendship he highly valued. Amongst these were Professor Smyth, whose annual visit continued to afford the highest gratification to him; and the Rev. William Shepherd, who, although he was prevented from enjoying the society of his friend so frequently as he did during the residence of the latter at Allerton, occasionally found opportunities of visiting him. The Collection of his Poems, published by him in the year 1829, is inscribed to Mr. Roscoe, in the following verses:—

"Friend of my youth! Thou whose approving smile
Cheer'd me whilst toiling up the steep ascent
Of knowledge—from whose breast I caught the glow
Of mental independence, and whose hand
Led me through virtue's peaceful paths—to thee
I consecrate these tributary lays.
What though thy setting sun, bedimm'd with clouds,
Nears the horizon, and the hour draws on
When it must sink beneath the western wave;
Yet, in high musings, faithful memory dwells
With transport on the time when erst it shone
In noontide lustre;—and in steadfast faith
In Him who died on Calvary, we await
The advent of that morning when its beams
Shall be relumed; and, never more obscured,
In ever-glowing splendour shall advance,
Nearer and nearer to the empyreal light,
That blazes, ceaseless, from the throne of God."

In making his acknowledgments for this volume, Mr. Roscoe says, "Accept my best thanks for the honourable, and I hope durable, memorial which you have raised to our long and uninterrupted friendship, and for the gratifying and affectionate terms in which it is expressed. I am also highly pleased with the tribute you have paid to the memory of our lamented friend, Johnes, and his charming daughter, whom you have embalmed with richer than Sabæan odours. With respect to myself, I cannot feel sufficiently grateful for the degree of strength which I yet enjoy, and in having been able to finish, since my illness, my Holkham catalogue, and my large botanical work, to which I have prefixed my inscription as I threatened, and of which I send you a copy with thanks for your emendation. I shall also avail myself of the present opportunity to return your books, which I have detained so unreasonable a length of time, and to which I have added two volumes of the Italian translation of my 'Illustrations of the Life of Lorenzo,' which I am sorry to say is not so well done as your 'Poggio,' by Tonelli, which is in every point of view a first-rate performance."

It was the good fortune of Mr. Roscoe to retain, even to the close of his life, that power of attracting the friendship of others, which had been from his youth one of his most marked characteristics. Amongst these, the friends of

his age, there was no one who became more sincerely attached to him, or for whom he himself felt a higher degree of esteem and affection, than Mr. Panizzi, an Italian gentleman, who had been compelled, in consequence of political persecutions, to abandon Italy, and to take refuge in England. Soon after his arrival in this country, he settled in Liverpool, as a teacher of the Italian language, where his talents and worth soon won the regard of Mr. Roscoe. To the kindness and attentions of Mr. Panizzi, which rather resembled those of a son than of a stranger, he owed many happy hours. Upon his appointment to the Professorship of Italian Literature in the University of London, Mr. Roscoe was deprived of his society, but had the pleasure of making him known to some of his friends. In a letter to Mr. Rogers, written in the year 1830, he thus introduces Mr. Panizzi to the notice of that gentleman:—

"This is intended to be delivered to you by my highly valued friend, Signor Antonio Panizzi, professor of the Italian language in the London University, who lived some years in Liverpool, whence he is now returning, after visiting the numerous friends whom he has made during his residence here. He is probably already known to you by his literary works,—particularly his edition of Bojardo and Ariosto, now publishing; in addition to which I beg leave to add my testi-

mony, not only to his abilities as an elegant scholar, but to his experienced worth as a sincere friend, and to his character as a man. It is, therefore, with great satisfaction, that I introduce him to your better acquaintance, being convinced that it cannot fail of being productive of pleasure and advantage to both."

Of Mr. Rogers's singularly beautiful edition of his "Italy," a copy of which was presented to him at this time, Mr. Roscoe expresses his high admiration in the same letter:—

"I do not consider this, your obliging remembrance of me, merely as an interesting and truly original poem, decorated with exquisite engravings, but as a production, in which the sister arts of poetry and painting are united to produce a simultaneous effect, as brilliant jewels are only seen to full advantage when set off by a beautiful face. The art of engraving has hitherto aimed only to please the eye, but it may now be said to have arrived at its highest excellence, and touched the deepest feelings of the mind. We must now acknowledge, that the finest effects of the pencil may be produced by the simple medium of light and shadow."

Many hours during the winter of 1830 were agreeably passed in the perusal of the Life of Dr. Currie, a work which he had long been desirous of executing himself, but which he was ultimately obliged to relinquish. The pleasure

and satisfaction which he derived from recalling the incidents of his friend's life are expressed in the following letter to Professor Smyth, dated the 2d January, 1831: —

"A reluctance to writing, which is incident to my complaints, and a continual course of avocations to which I am obliged to attend, have so long prevented my replying to your several kind and affectionate letters that I am almost ashamed of recalling myself to your friendly recollection. The approaching publication of the life of his father by our friend Wallace Currie, induces me, however, to address a few lines to you to express my approbation of that work; the first volume of which I have just read with deep interest and great satisfaction, and which has relieved me from an uneasy sensation, which I have always felt, at not having undertaken the work myself, owing to my numerous and unavoidable avocations, and has convinced me, that, on many accounts, I could not have accomplished it so well as it has been done by his son.

"This work, which is to be immediately published, will, I trust, not only be acceptable to the numerous friends of Dr. Currie, but a favourite with the public at large, as it gives a faithful representation of an individual of a lofty and magnanimous character, uniformly devoting his energies to the highest objects of human

pursuit, and always earnest to promote the best interests of human nature. That you and I, my dear friend, should have the happiness to have our names associated in the records of such a man's life cannot fail to be to each of us a source of the highest satisfaction.

"I have frequently intended to congratulate you on the wonderful events that have taken place in Europe, and particularly in France, in the course of the last six months; but I have been scarcely less interested in the struggle which is now taking place in Poland, respecting which ill-fated country we both of us took so active a part upwards of thirty years ago. We cannot but wait with great anxiety the result of the present struggle between despotism and liberty in Europe, of which I hope you will live to see the happy result, which is more than at my time of life I can have any reason to expect.

"Since writing the foregoing I have received from Wallace Currie a complete copy of the Doctor's life, which he has done me the honour of dedicating to me in a kind and friendly address. From the short survey I have hitherto been enabled to take of it, I think it will do great credit both to his father and himself. The Doctor's letters are particularly valuable."

It had long been the intention of Mr. Roscoe to publish a selection from his own poems, and also from those which had at various periods

been written by different members of his family. During the present winter, he found much amusement in looking over the manuscripts and in selecting such as he thought worthy of being given to the world. The collection was intended to include "Mount Pleasant," "The Wrongs of Africa," and some others of his early pieces. Unfortunately the state of his health prevented him from completing his revision of the manuscripts, and the poems remain unpublished.*

He perused about this time, with much interest, the Life of De Witt Clinton, by Dr. Hosack, of New York, to whom he expressed his opinion of the work in the following letter, written in the summer of 1830: —

"Some time previous to the receipt of the letter with which you honoured me, dated the 29th April, 1829, and accompanying the present of your valuable Memoir of Governor Clinton, I had an attack of paralysis, which interfered with my usual occupations, and for some time interrupted my correspondence; and although, by the blessing of God and by the aid of repeated depletion and other remedies, I have been restored to such a state of health as to be able to devote a prescribed portion of my

* The following is the title which he intended to give to the selection: — "Poems, Original and Fugitive; written between the years 1770 and 1830: by William Roscoe. To which are added, Poems by some of his Children. Liverpool, 1831."

time to the society of my friends and the perusal of my books, — a result at my time of life, approaching my seventy-eighth year, scarcely to be expected,—yet, it has not been till of late that I have been able to undertake the perusal of so large a work as yours, which I have now read, not only without any injurious consequences to my health, but with great information and amusement.

"At the same time, I have imbibed a very distinct idea and favourable opinion of the truly great and good man whose character you have so admirably depicted; and whose great and various merits you have so ably illustrated and explained.

"Writing, as I now do, under the immediate impressions derived from the perusal of your noble tribute to the memory of your friend, it would be unjust in me to suppress the feelings with which I have been actuated, or to deny that, highly as I estimate such a character in a nation abounding in great men, I consider your production as having shown you worthy to have been his biographer, and whilst you have raised an imperishable monument to his fame, to have given the surest earnest of your own.

"In addition to the regret I feel in not having been able to reply sooner to your letter, I am sorry not to have transmitted you the few documents requested by you respecting my late highly esteemed friend Thomas Eddy, of whom

I have read several interesting memorials in your work; but the same calamity that prevented me from writing, also prevented me performing this duty, having taken me when my papers were in such a state of derangement that they could not for a long time be looked into. I am, however, in some degree consoled by the consideration that you will not have been delayed in your intended account of him by my apparent negligence; my correspondence with him being only occasional, and extending to little more than the interchange of new publications; although I always entertained a very high opinion both of his benevolence and his literary talents."

It will be recollected that at a very early period of his life Mr. Roscoe had collected the moral precepts of the New Testament into a small volume, to which he gave the title of "Christian Morality, as contained in the Precepts of the New Testament; in the Language of Jesus Christ." In the decline of life this youthful attempt was recalled to his mind by a work of a similar character proceeding from a very unlooked for quarter. This was "The Precepts of Jesus," collected, arranged, and published at Calcutta by a learned Brahmin, Rammohun Roy, who having become a convert to Christianity, endeavoured in this manner to recommend the religion of Christ to his countrymen. The character and history of this extra-

ordinary man excited in the highest degree the interest and the admiration of Mr. Roscoe. Not only had he emancipated his mind from the dark and cruel superstitions in which he had been educated, but he had cultivated his intellect to a degree which few of the natives of more favoured climes attain. For the purpose of studying the Scriptures he had rendered himself familiar with the Hebrew and the Greek, and had improved his mind by the study of various branches of knowledge. But these were his least merits. The great excellence of his character consisted in his enlarged views with regard to the welfare and improvement of his species, and in the benevolent zeal with which he promoted every project for the extension of education and of useful knowledge amongst the inhabitants of India. Of this zeal he gave a striking proof in the erection of a printing-press at Calcutta, at which his own work, "The Precepts of Jesus," and other volumes calculated to extend the influence of Christianity amongst the Hindoos, were printed.

It is not surprising that with a man of this high and enlightened character Mr. Roscoe should be desirous of communicating; and accordingly he took advantage of the opportunity of one of his friends (the late Mr. Thomas Hodgson Fletcher of Liverpool) proceeding to India, to transmit to Rammohun Roy a small

collection of his works, which he accompanied with the following letter: —

"Although I have not the honour of being known to you, I am no stranger to your writings, nor to the uniform and noble manner in which you have asserted the cause of true and genuine Christianity, against the sophisms and absurdities of those who would persuade us that they are the only objects of the benevolence of the great Creator and common Father of all His offspring. It seems strange even to myself that so long a time has elapsed, in which I have been aware how nearly my opinions on religious subjects have agreed with your own, without introducing myself to your acquaintance. The fact is, that within the first twenty years of a life which is now verging on its seventy-eighth year, I had devoted myself to the task of forming, as far as possible, a complete code of moral conduct, from the precepts of Jesus Christ as given in the New Testament, in his own words; in which I had made a considerable progress; and although circumstances prevented my completing it, yet the impression which the attempt made on my own mind convinced me, that true Christianity consists alone in doing the will of our Father which is in heaven, which will is not only sufficiently, but most powerfully and beautifully enforced in that sacred volume.

"In my riper years, as the affairs of the

world engaged my attention, I have been employed on most of the great subjects of human interest; and have written and published on politics, jurisprudence, history, criticism, science, and literature, according to the measure of my abilities, and with the consciousness, in whatever department I have been engaged, of having promoted, to the best of my power, the improvement and happiness of my fellow-creatures.

"Some of these works I would even flatter myself may, perhaps, have occurred to your notice; but at all events, that I may not suffer the little that remains to me of this life to pass away without being better known to you, and having at present a favourable opportunity of sending you a few volumes on various subjects that may give you a tolerable idea how I have been employed, I have made up a specimen of my writings, which I have to desire you will accept as the gift of one friend to another; in order that, if they should be received in the same spirit in which they are sent, they may in fact diminish the barrier which Providence has placed between us, and introduce us to the society of each other, to be united, during our future lives, as true and faithful followers of our common Master.

"The opportunity to which I have above alluded is that of a young friend who is about to depart from hence on a voyage to Calcutta,

where it is his intention to take up his residence in a mercantile capacity, and who is desirous of an introduction to you, for the freedom of which I must trust myself to your indulgence.

* * * * * *

" We have, for some time past, been flattered with hopes of seeing you in this kingdom, but I fear I am not destined to have that pleasure. At all events, it will be a great gratification to me if I should survive the attacks of the paralytic complaint, under which I have now laboured for some years, till I hear that you have received this very sincere mark of the deep respect and attachment which I have so long entertained for you, and which I hope to renew in a happier state of being.

" I am, my dear Sir,

" Your assured friend and fellow-christian,

" W. R.

" To the celebrated and learned
Rammohun Roy, Calcutta."

Before this letter could reach its destination Mr. Roscoe had the unexpected gratification of hearing that the extraordinary person to whom it was addressed was already on his voyage to Europe. This intelligence was quickly followed by his arrival at Liverpool, where his character and striking appearance excited much curiosity and interest. The interview between him and

Mr. Roscoe will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. After the usual gesture of eastern salutation, and with a mixture of oriental expression, Rammohun Roy said, "Happy and proud am I — proud and happy to behold a man whose fame has extended not only over Europe, but over every part of the world." — "I bless God," replied Mr. Roscoe, "that I have been permitted to live to see this day." Their conversation chiefly turned upon the objects which had led Rammohun Roy to this country, and in the course of it he displayed an intimate acquaintance with the political and commercial state of England. His visit to Liverpool was a very short one, from his anxiety to be present at the third reading of the Reform Bill, and at the debates on the subject of India; and on his departure for London he carried with him the following letter from Mr. Roscoe to Lord Brougham: —

"I have the great honour and very singular pleasure of introducing to your Lordship's kind notice and attention the bearer of this, the celebrated and learned Rammohun Roy, who is just arrived here from Calcutta, and of whom you must already have frequently heard as the illustrious Convert from Hindooism to Christianity, and the author of the selections from the New Testament of "The Precepts of Jesus;" by the publication and diffusion of which amongst

the natives of the East reasonable hopes are now entertained, that, in a short time, the shocking system and cruel practices of Paganism will be abolished, and the people of those populous regions be restored to the pure and simple precepts of morality and brotherly love. Amongst the many and important motives which have induced him to leave his country and connections, and visit this island, I understand he is induced to hope he may be of some assistance in promoting the cause of the natives of India in the great debates which must ere long take place here, respecting the Charter of the East India Company; but I have yet seen so little of him, from his numerous engagements here, that I must leave your Lordship to learn his intentions from himself, which you will find him very capable of explaining in his own strong and appropriate English idiom. One great reason, as I understand, for his haste to leave this for London, is to be present to witness the great measures that will be taken by your Lordship and your illustrious colleagues, for promoting the long wished-for reform of his native country. On the present occasion, I will not trouble you further than to request, that, if it should not be inconsistent with your Lordship's station and convenience, you would obtain for our distinguished visiter the benefit of a seat under the gallery in the House of Commons, on the debate on the

third reading of the Reform Bill; which favour I am anxious he should owe rather to your Lordship (if you have no objection to it) than to other individuals, to whom, I understand, he has letters of introduction."

During the spring of the year 1831 there was little alteration in Mr. Roscoe's health, though it was obvious that he was becoming more and more feeble, and that any fresh attack of illness must prove eminently dangerous. He still continued to enjoy the society of his family, and of the friends who occasionally visited him; and when the weather permitted, he sometimes walked for a few minutes in his small garden, where he watched, with much pleasure, the progress of his few favourite flowers. He was fully sensible how very frail the tenure of his life had become; and as he stood, a short time before his last attack of illness, admiring the beauty of a border of white lilies, he remarked that, perishable as they were, they would probably survive him. But no feeling of dejection was mingled with these thoughts. A few weeks before his death, in a conversation with his friend and physician, Dr. Traill, he spoke calmly of his increasing feebleness and probable early dissolution. "He thanked the Almighty for having permitted him to pass a life of much happiness, which, though somewhat checkered by vicissitude, had been, on the whole, one of great

enjoyment; and he trusted that he should be enabled cheerfully to resign it whenever it pleased God to call him."*

In this tranquil and happy frame of mind he continued to the last. Towards the conclusion of the month of June he suffered from a severe attack of a prevailing influenza, from which he appeared to have partially recovered, when, on the evening of Monday the 27th of June, while listening to a letter which one of his sons was reading to him, containing an account of the progress of the Reform Bill, he was suddenly seized with a violent fit of shivering, accompanied by an almost total prostration of strength. He was, with difficulty, conveyed to his bed, from which he never again rose. At this trying hour that confidence in the goodness of God, and that submission to His will, which had supported him in every vicissitude of his life, did not desert him, and he resigned himself, without one murmur, to the change which he well knew was near at hand. While yet able, with difficulty, to make himself understood, he said to Dr. Traill, — "Some people suffer much in dying; I do not suffer." On the morning of Wednesday he indistinctly enquired from his highly valued medical attendant, Mr. Bickersteth, his opinion with regard to his situation;

* Dr. Traill's Memoir.

and, on receiving his reply, he took leave of him with affectionate composure, by extending to him his hand. Soon afterwards he became unable, from weakness, to articulate, though he retained his senses till within an hour of his death, which took place at eleven o'clock, on Thursday morning, the 30th of June. The immediate cause of his death was an effusion of water into the chest.

He has himself described, in speaking of the death of Mr. Reynolds, the feelings with which it became his family to regard their loss. "If ever there was an occasion on which the tears we shed are tears of affection and tenderness, rather than of grief and distress, it is when a good man, full of years and honour, goes to receive the reward of his labours, leaving to those who are dearest to him the benefit of his example, the credit of his widely respected name, and the delightful hope that, by following in his track, they will finally be admitted to his society again in a happier state of being."

He was interred in the burying ground attached to the Unitarian Chapel in Renshaw Street, the service being performed by his valued and long tried friend, the Rev. William Shepherd. His funeral was attended by a very considerable body of his private friends, and of those whose esteem for his character induced them to show this voluntary mark of respect to

his memory, and an eloquent and touching funeral sermon was preached on the 17th of July, by the Rev. J. H. Thom, the minister of Renshaw Street Chapel.

Mr. Roscoe left a family, surviving him, of six sons and two daughters. He had lost one daughter in infancy, and a son in mature age. His eldest daughter was married, in the year 1825, to Thomas Jevons, Esq., of Liverpool.

Soon after his death a subscription was opened at Liverpool, for the purpose of raising a monument to his memory.*

* See Appendix, No. I.

CHAPTER XXI.

Mr. Roscoe's life a useful example. — His moral qualities — his consistency in politics — in his religious opinions — in his tastes and pursuits — in his attachment to works of art and poetry — in his friendships. — The reward of consistency. — His humility — his ambition, and love of literary fame — his own feelings with regard to the success of his writings — his humanity — his charity. — Devotional feelings of Mr. Roscoe — his early study of the Scriptures. — Letter on the presentation of a Bible to him. — His religious poems — hymn — sentiments on religious liberty. — Mr. Roscoe's political opinions — his enlarged and liberal views — objects of his political exertions — political poems — lines. — Mr. Roscoe's acquirements as a scholar — his acquaintance with the classical languages — with the modern languages — his taste in English poetry — his knowledge of botany — his love of the fine arts — his promotion of literary and scientific institutions — his power of generalisation — his energy in literary pursuits. — Mr. Roscoe's friends in early life — in middle age — his associates in political and local improvements — his political friends — the friends acquired by his philanthropic exertions — by his literary character. — Mr. Coke of Norfolk. — Distinguished foreigners — Americans, Italians — his botanical friends. — The grounds upon which his friendships rested — his demeanour in society. — Mr. Roscoe's domestic character. — Poems addressed to him by his children.

CHAPTER XXI.

The history of Mr. Roscoe's life affords an encouraging picture to all, but especially to those who, like himself, have to contend with the disadvantages arising from the want of education and of fortune. All that he became was the result of his own exertions. Without the assistance of rank, or wealth, or powerful friends, or accomplished instructors, he raised himself to a station in society, and to an eminence in literature, which few persons, with every adventitious aid, have attained. Nor must it be forgotten, that this was accomplished, not so much by means of extraordinary talents, as by energetic and diligent application, and by an ardent desire of rendering himself useful to mankind. In the highest and the best parts of his character he is open to the imitation of all:—in his integrity and sincerity; in his attachment to freedom and truth; in his earnest endeavours to do good; in the purity of his public principles; in the beauty of his private life; and in his serene submission to the will of God.

Much of the respect with which Mr. Roscoe

was regarded arose from that consistency, both in principles and in conduct, which, extending over his whole life, gave a harmony and crowning beauty to his character. From the early period of his youth, down to the last days of his declining age, he had been the uniform and earnest advocate of the same principles; applying them in turn to all the most important subjects of human interest. In his writings on politics, on morals, on jurisprudence, and on every other subject where the application of those principles was involved, one and the same spirit was uniformly manifested; a spirit of benevolence, of liberal thought, and of generous confidence in human nature. Throughout every action of his life, the same enlarged views were visible; and never, perhaps, was any man's course more free from the taint of low or mean motives. This consistency of character resulted from an integrity of heart, which suffered neither his feelings nor his judgment to be biassed by those views of interest or expediency, which often mislead the wise, and sometimes even the good.

It is proper to point out this consistency in right principles and right conduct, as the true source of the high personal reputation which Mr. Roscoe enjoyed; to show, that it was not to the possession of great talents, nor of brilliant qualities, nor to the merit of public services, though to these he had some claim, that he was

indebted for the respect and the admiration so generally exhibited towards him, but to qualities which every one possesses, and which, if duly cultivated, will lead to the same results. Genius, learning, and accomplishments, may excite wonder or extort praise; but it is only the higher qualities of consistent integrity and generous benevolence that can secure respect or confer real influence.

In taking even a cursory review of Mr. Roscoe's life, the striking coherency of his opinions and conduct at every period of it will be visible. In politics his course was truly uniform and undeviating. Never, for a moment, in periods of disaster and of danger, when even brave men hesitated, did he abandon the open assertion of those liberal principles which then marked out their professors, not only to the jealousy of the government, but to public odium. Throughout the whole course of the French war he never ceased to oppose it, in public and in private, in his speeches and in his writings, as unjust, impolitic, and destructive. While he deeply lamented over the excesses of the French revolution, he did not, as many did, abandon the principles and the feelings which had led him to rejoice at its commencement. He knew that the crimes and the wickedness of man could not affect the immutable principles of justice and of freedom. In his attachment to parliamentary

reform, which he regarded as necessary to the security of our own free institutions, he was inflexibly constant; and when many of the political friends with whom he had acted, and whose opinions he was accustomed to regard with respect, displayed a coldness on this question, which seemed to portend a total abandonment of it, Mr. Roscoe became but the more warmly interested in its progress. From the age of seventeen, when he wrote his poem of "Mount Pleasant," to the period of his death, the subject of the Slave Trade had been one of the most unceasing interest to him; and after giving his vote for the abolition, he continued his efforts to procure the abandonment of it by other nations, and the total abolition of slavery in our own colonies. In his adherence to the principles of Protestant dissent, in which he had been educated, and which his judgment approved, he was equally consistent; nor would he ostensibly conform to the Establishment for the acquisition of any personal distinction.

Even in his tastes and favourite occupations, the same spirit of constancy was evinced. That love of literature which was the joy of his youth was also the solace of his age. His attachment to works of art continued at every perod of life to afford him pleasure: — the few prints he possessed at the close of his life, and the small collection which he had made in his youth,

perhaps, gave him equal gratification. But, in nothing was the enduring nature of his tastes more visible, than in the delight which poetry afforded him in youth, in manhood, and in age; and in the undying sensibility which, to the last, he continued to manifest to its powers.

In friendship, also, the unchangeableness of Mr. Roscoe's affections was most pleasingly manifested. The friends of his youth were only lost to him in death, and he seemed to inspire in others the same abiding attachment. Nor was it the name only, but the warmth of friendship, which remained; and which was continued to the descendants of the early friends of whom the grave had deprived him.

The reward of consistency is great. Mr. Roscoe lived to see the justice of almost all the leading principles which he had advocated fully acknowledged. He lived to witness the adoption of nearly every measure of importance for which he had laboured, through good report and through evil report. He was permitted to partake of the triumph which the friends of liberty obtained in the abolition of the Slave Trade. He saw the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, and of the laws which disabled the Roman Catholics. He beheld peace restored, and he saw the rise of a better system of things in France. He flattered himself that more correct views on the great subject of Penal Jurisprudence were ex-

tending themselves; and, lastly, he survived to witness all but the completion of the grand work of Parliamentary Reform.

Another of the most amiable and striking traits of Mr. Roscoe's character was, "that spirit of humility and modesty which ought to be inseparable from the consciousness of human imperfection, and which softens the asperities and corrects the pride even of virtue herself."* During a long life he had occupied, in various ways, a distinguished situation. From being the first person in his family, he had become one of the first amongst his townsmen; his fame was then extended not only in his own country, but to foreign nations, by his literary works. He was, without any solicitation on his part, returned as the representative of his native town to parliament. He had acquired the personal friendship of men celebrated for their station, their character, and their talents. The letters of his correspondents were filled with the most flattering expressions of respect and admiration; and upon all hands he met with a consideration and observance which would have induced many men to exaggerate their own importance. It is an expression of Burke's, which he makes use of in his will, that, "in his lifetime, he had had too much of noise and compliment." He felt that the purity

* Life of Pope.

of his character had been sullied by the incense. But such was not the effect of his celebrity upon the pure mind and simple feelings of Mr. Roscoe. A native modesty, which never departed from him, taught him to set a just value on the homage of the world. He knew of how small account all talents are, in themselves, and how little justified we are in priding ourselves upon the possession of that which is only an additional obligation upon us to virtuous exertion. He looked with comparative indifference upon the reputation which he had acquired as an author, but frequently expressed the satisfaction he felt, that, by the principles and spirit of his writings, he might have contributed, in some degree, to the happiness of mankind. He was not, indeed, insensible to that honourable praise, which, after the consciousness of doing good, is the best reward of human labours, but he never, for a moment, permitted the idea of public commendation or blame to influence his actions. He was not devoid of ambition, but it was an ambition purified from dross. He was not ambitious of wealth, or of place, or of power, unless it was the power of doing good. Though he frequently came forwards in public, yet it was from no desire of personal distinction; and so little was he governed by motives of this kind, that, when he was called upon to become a candidate for the representation of Liverpool, there probably was not a person in the town

who felt so much surprise as himself at a request so honourable to his character. He did not possess any great desire to become distinguished in public life, feeling that his love of retirement would be ever at war with such a career. His sole ambition was to be the instrument of disseminating amongst mankind the great principles which must eventually lead to their improvement and happiness; and in this cause, so dear to his heart, he has not, it may be hoped, laboured in vain.

On the love of fame, as influencing the literary character, he has himself made some remarks, in an unpublished work, from which the following passages are extracted: —

"Another passion is excited, and the love of fame becomes the stimulating principle. 'As life is short,' says Sallust, in assigning the reasons for undertaking his history, 'we ought to use our endeavours to prolong our memory as much as is in our power;' hereby avowing that the motives of his work were concentrated in himself, and that the desire of posthumous reputation prompted him to his undertaking. Gibbon, without denying the influence of this sentiment, has modified it with that of the desire of utility. 'I would despise an author,' says he, 'regardless of the benefit of his readers. I would admire him who, wholly attentive to their utility, should be totally indifferent to his own

fame. I stand in neither of these predicaments.' Again; 'I ought soon to choose some portion of history which may do me credit, if well treated.' Nor is the love of fame, considered as a concurrent cause, an unworthy motive of exertion. If the disinterested wish to be eminently useful to others be the mark of a virtuous character, the desire of reputation is that of a great and soaring mind; and it is, perhaps, to the union of these that the world is indebted for the numerous works, in ancient and modern times, which may be regarded as the lights and landmarks of the human race. When, however, the desire of benefiting mankind is absorbed and lost in the passion for celebrity, the most injurious consequences cannot fail to ensue. That predilection for a particular country, which is often veiled under the specious name of patriotism, and that bigotted adherence to a sect which assumes the character of religious zeal, are often the immediate sources of partiality or misrepresentation; but the writer who is actuated by a disinterested desire of rendering service to a party or a cause is yet more respectable than he who feels no interest whatever for the public, but selects a subject which may display his talents to the best advantage, and executes his undertaking in such a manner as seems most conducive, not to the instruction and benefit of others, but to his own fame. 'Whatever the

subject of such a writer may be, he is, in fact, his own hero. At every opportunity he introduces himself, in his own person, to his reader, demands his attention, challenges his approbation, and reminds him of his obligations; striking novelties are substituted for important truths, the ornaments of language for the fidelity of narration; in short, whatever can amuse or allure, whatever may excite surprise or attract approbation, is uniformly preferred to that which may enlighten, inform, and improve."

In conformity with these principles, it was Mr. Roscoe's constant endeavour to make his literary powers subservient to the improvement and happiness of his fellow-creatures, regarding the exertion of his talents with satisfaction, only when they contributed to the public good. It was the influence of these feelings which led him to take so much pleasure in the reflection that his writings on the subject of Prison Discipline had not been without effect. "When he learnt," says Dr. Traill, "from various quarters, that the change which was taking place in the prison discipline of America was, in no small degree, attributed to his expostulations, I heard him repeatedly declare that no literary distinction had afforded him half the gratification he received from the reflection on the part he had taken on this great question; and he expressed his satisfaction that he now might be permitted

to think that he had not lived altogether in vain."*

It was the same spirit which led him (deeply persuaded as he was of the truth and justice of the views which he had taken) to engage in the distasteful labour of political discussion, — to interest himself in the public occurrences of the day, and to devote to controversy the hours which he would gladly have dedicated to the pleasanter pursuits of literature. He has himself, in some lines already given, beautifully expressed these feelings in the prayer, —

"That when removed from grief and pain,
This fragile form in earth shall lie,
Some happier effort may remain
To touch one human heart with joy;

"One nobler precept to bestow,
One kind and generous wish reveal,
To bid the breast with virtue glow,
To love, to pity, and to feel;

"To soothe the ills it cannot cure,
The sufferer's injuries redress;
And through life's varied channels pour
The living stream of happiness."

Another modification of that feeling of benevolence which existed so strong within his breast was his humanity to animals. He practised and he taught to those around him the lesson, —

"'Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

* Dr. Traill's Memoir.

He has himself related the pain he suffered on witnessing the dying agonies of a bird which he had shot on his first and last fowling excursion; and his "Elegy to Pity," written in his early youth, displays the same tenderness of feeling:—

"Devoid of fear, the fawns around thee play;
Emblem of peace, the dove before thee flies;
No blood-stain'd traces mark thy blameless way,
Beneath thy feet no harmless insect dies."

Not to have possessed these feelings would, indeed, have been totally at variance with the rest of his character, which was strongly marked with an aversion to cruelty and oppression of every kind. He has noticed, with much commendation, the existence of similar feelings in the breast of Pope*,—"feelings which are, indeed, inseparable from a humane and generous character, and which are founded on a sense of compassion and kindness towards the lower orders of animated being."—"Of this," Mr. Roscoe adds, "he gave a decisive proof in an excellent paper in the Guardian of the 21st May, 1713, in which he has endeavoured to inculcate just notions of the relations that subsist between man and the inferior animals, and to rescue them from those persecutions and cruelties to which they are so frequently and so inconsiderately exposed. I cannot think it extravagant," says he, "to ima-

* Life of Pope, p. 569.

gine that mankind are no less, in proportion, accountable for the ill-use of their dominion over creatures of the lower rank of beings, than for the exercise of tyranny over their own species. The more entirely the inferior creature is submitted to our power, the more answerable we should seem for our mismanagement of it; and the rather, as the very condition of nature renders these creatures incapable of receiving any recompense in another life for their ill-treatment in this."

The disposition of Mr. Roscoe to assist those who might stand in need of his aid, and the readiness with which, in the midst of his numerous engagements, he was accustomed to listen to such applications, afforded him frequently an opportunity of rendering important services at a small expense of time and attention. His name, also, being very generally known, he was applied to, not only by persons in Liverpool, but in remote parts of the country, soliciting his advice and assistance; sometimes upon matters of literature, and sometimes with regard to their own private affairs.* Many of these requests manifest the great confidence generally felt in his judgment and in his benevolence;—a confidence which his conduct on these occasions proved to be not undeserved.

* See Appendix, No. II.

Of his devotional feelings some idea may be formed from various passages in the preceding narrative. "He had," says Dr. Traill*, "deep and solemn feelings of devotion, which it was not his practice to obtrude on his acquaintances, but which he occasionally expressed to his intimate friends, in the language of heartfelt piety. The beautiful invocation to the Deity, which he substituted for the intended dedication of his great botanical work, breathes the deep fervour of his adoration to the Supreme Creator." In nothing did the depth and sincerity of his religious impressions more strikingly manifest themselves than in the patient, uncomplaining submission with which he yielded to calamity. A perfect confidence in the goodness of God supported him through many trials, and enabled him to regard with feelings of cheerful hope the approach of death itself.

The spirit of submission and trust which governed his conduct is expressed in the following letter, written to a lady for whom he entertained a high degree of respect and regard, immediately after the loss of one of her daughters:—

"I was not disappointed in the idea I had formed of the firmness with which you would sustain the heavy loss with which you have been afflicted, because, I knew, that such firmness

* See Dr. Traill's Memoir.

was not a mere effort of human strength, but was founded on that humility and submission to the will of God, which is the result of a thorough confidence in all His dispensations. Under this impression we cannot but perceive, that His goodness is as great, although not so apparent, in what He takes away as in what He gives; in what He denies to our wishes, as in what He grants; and although it certainly requires an effort to act upon these convictions at the moment when calamity falls upon us, yet we may be assured, that every event that occurs, if rightly used and improved by us, is only a part of that great moral process which is intended to exalt our character, and improve our capacity for happiness in a better state."

At an early age he had diligently and seriously studied the Sacred Writings, and had collected from them, as the rule of life, the moral precepts of Jesus Christ. Towards the close of his life he began to revise this youthful effort, and had his health permitted him, it is probable that he would have prepared it for the press. The result of these enquiries may be stated in his own words:— "The belief in Christ and in Christianity, so strongly and uniformly inculcated in the Holy Scriptures, is not the embracing or holding a particular doctrine; but a belief which results in action, which evinces itself in all the relations and concerns of life,

which induces us to follow the precepts and imitate the example of Christ, which is not a mere vain and empty pretension to superior wisdom, knowledge, or power, but which humbly seeks to discover what are the duties we have to perform."

In the year 1820, a lady of Liverpool, with whom he had little personal acquaintance, presented to him a copy of the Bible, accompanied by a letter expressing her respect for his character, and her concern for his spiritual welfare. His reply will give some idea of his opinions on religious subjects.

"On my return home, after an absence of four months, I found the copy of the Holy Bible, which you have been so good as to present to me, and which is rendered still more acceptable by the expression of friendly regard by which it is accompanied. In thus availing myself of your kindness, you will not, I am sure, suppose that I have remained till this late period of my life unacquainted with its contents. The recommendations in your letter were impressed on my mind in my earliest days, and I sincerely join in the opinion of Sir W. Jones, and yourself, in the character he has given of the sacred writings.

"Allow me to add, that I have, on more occasions than one, borne my humble testimony to their excellence, and have endeavoured, as far

as it lay in my power, to prevent their remaining a dead letter, by calling the precepts of the New Testament into practical use, and introducing their sublime principles and humane spirit into the institutions of civil society. If you will do me the favour to peruse the concluding pages of a tract which I published in 1819, entitled 'Observations on Penal Jurisprudence and the Reformation of Criminals,' you will find a specimen of those efforts to which I have ventured to allude.

"The same sentiments which I have myself imbibed have descended to my children, and will, I trust, produce richer fruits. May I hope you will perceive some earnest of this in the little volume by which this is accompanied, the production of my younger daughter, expressing those religious sentiments and feelings, which, I hope, you will yourself approve."

His devotional feelings were, at every period of his life, occasionally poured forth in the language of poetry; and the depth and purity of those feelings are sensibly manifested in the following hymn, written in his early youth, and displaying perhaps a too sensitive consciousness of his own imperfections. Many of his other devotional pieces are already before the public.

HYMN.

Heavenly Father! in whose sight
Darkness flashes into light,
Gracious, from thy throne on high
Cast on me a pitying eye:
See my soul in anguish tost,
Lost to peace, to virtue lost,
Struggling with its weighty chain,
Struggling ever, but in vain;
As some wretch, the tempest o'er,
Labours to regain the shore,
So, my God, my spirit tries
From the sea of vice to rise.
Still my powers are weak to save,
Still pursues some stronger wave,
And, with a resistless sweep,
'Whelms me in the foaming deep.

Long, the dupe of human pride,
Have I on myself relied;
Long sustain'd th' unequal strife
That defended more than life;
By such weak allies betray'd,
Now no more I trust their aid,
But to safer refuge flee,
Resting all my hopes on Thee.

God of love! my faults forgive,
Bid me hope, and bid me live;
Let some dawn of light control
This long darkness of the soul;
From the temple of my heart
Bid each grovelling thought depart,
And to guard its peace supply
Steadfast faith and holy joy:
Meek repentance, in whose eyes
Tears of true contrition rise;

Gratitude, whose hands are prest
Duteous on her feeling breast;
These shall in Thy sacred way
Guide my feet, long prone to stray,
Till, each meaner passion o'er,
I may tempt thy frown no more;
Nor, of youth and vigour vain,
Sow in sin to reap in pain.

Swiftly fly the rolling year!
Till that happier morn appear
That my noblest hopes shall see
Centred, O my God! in Thee!—
That shall teach my thoughts to rise
O'er the world and all its joys;
Bend obedient to thy laws;
Feel the worth of self-applause;
Nobly scorn each meaner care,
And in conscious virtue dare
All that comes in misery's train,
Sickness, poverty, and pain,
Heedless of the hour of fate,
And prepared for either state.

On the subject of freedom in matters of religious opinion he has expressed his sentiments in a letter to the Rev. Dr. Butler, thanking him for a copy of his installation sermon. "The assertion and defence of truth," he says, "is incumbent upon every one, and particularly upon every teacher of religion; but there is one truth, paramount to all the rest, which is the very basis of religious enquiry, without which all discussion is absurd, viz. that every person, in his spiritual concerns, has a right

to adopt such opinions as appear to him to be right. This being previously understood, a free and useful discussion may take place; but, until this foundation be once established, nothing but confusion and dissension can ensue. You, my dear sir, would concede this liberty as freely as you would claim it, and your liberal sermon does much towards recommending and enforcing it; but, after all, it is much to be feared that these sentiments are rather those of the individual than of the body; and that neither Luther, nor any of the churches founded under his sanction, tolerate, in the full and fair meaning of the word, any opinions but their own."

It was in his political opinions, more especially, that the character of Mr. Roscoe developed itself. Those opinions were founded upon the principles of truth, justice, and generosity. Rejecting altogether the narrow and mistaken doctrines by which statesmen have suffered themselves to be governed, he applied to the intercourse of states, and to the government of nations, those rules of morality and those maxims of honour, integrity, and good faith, upon which the safety and happiness of individuals depend. He deprecated the policy which seeks to exalt one nation at the expense of another, and he resolutely resisted that system of government which aims at benefiting a portion of the community, to the exclusion of the rest. He ab-

horred the adoption of bad means under the pretext of obtaining a good end, well knowing that an abandonment of the great rules of virtue and morality is poorly compensated by any temporary advantage. He has truly said, "No end can justify the sacrifice of a principle, nor was a crime ever necessary in the course of human affairs. The sudden burst of vindictive passion may sometimes occasion important changes in the fate of nations; but the event is seldom within the limits of human calculation. It is only the calm energy of reason, constantly bearing up against the encroachments of power, that can with certainty perpetuate the freedom or promote the happiness of the human race."*

He had a lofty and generous confidence in human nature, which led him to believe that mankind might be best governed through their judgment and their affections, and that the dominion founded upon force, or fear, or fraud, was at once unstable and noxious. Integrity of purpose, and a sincere desire to do good, were, he well knew, the true bonds which unite a government to the people. He felt the same trust in the character of nations. "What," he asks, "would be the condition of private society, if envy, jealousy, fear, distrust, and hatred, were the only feelings by which mankind were actu-

* Life of Lorenzo, vol. ii. p. 305., last edition.

ated? But still more unfortunate is it when these dreadful and unsocial passions are intermingled in the character of nations, and influence the conduct of states towards each other."

His great desire was to witness the removal of those restraints upon the freedom of thought and action which subject one set of men to the caprice, the ignorance, and the malice of another. He therefore opposed, to the utmost of his power, the continuance of negro slavery, the disabilities imposed on the ground of religious opinions, and the injurious restrictions by which the commerce of this country has so long been crippled. To the complete removal of these evils, and to the establishment of a truly patriotic government, he clearly saw that a reform in the representation of the people was essential; and to this, as to the instrument of great and beneficial changes, he was ever anxious to lend his assistance. But, while the country was struggling with a sanguinary and expensive war, he well knew that it was in vain to look for political improvement, and he therefore devoted all the energies of his mind to the cause of peace. Of the effect produced by his political writings, it is difficult to form an opinion; but from the popularity of some of his pamphlets, it is not unreasonable to conclude that his arguments were not without their influence on the state of public opinion.

The strong political feelings with which the mind of Mr. Roscoe was often excited were not unfrequently expressed in verse. Of these poems several specimens have been given in the preceding pages, and the following lines are now added, written at an early period of his life:—

ON READING SOME LINES IN WHICH THE CHARACTER OF OLIVER CROMWELL WAS GROSSLY ABUSED, AND THAT OF CHARLES I. HIGHLY COMMENDED.

Hired slave of greatness! servile tool of state!
Thy bosom labouring with thy country's hate!
Whose tongue would lick the dust where tyrants trod!
And, whilst thou felt the power, would'st kiss the rod!
The abject friend of Stuart's perjured line,
And the mean advocate of right divine!
Go, fawning wretch! from Albion's freeborn land;
Go, seek, with trembling steps, some southern strand,
Where kneeling slaves around their sovereign wait,
His smile their transport, and his fury fate;
Where freedom from the nerveless clime is flown,
And the dear name of property unknown;
Where love connubial dreads a tyrant's lust,
And man, a reptile, grovels in the dust.
There, in thy native clime, thy toils pursue,
And bind with weightier chains the patient crew;
Teach them that Heaven, in wrath to man, design'd
That one should reign, the lord of all his kind;
That God for him the feast of nature spread,
And screen'd from justice his anointed head.
Soon shall thy various merits stand confest,
Thou the first minion of the tyrant's breast;
Till one, more mean, if any such can be,
Shall snatch the golden meed design'd for thee;
And thou, dependent on thy master's breath,
Shalt from the bowstring meet a silent death.

O glorious day! O heaven-directed hour!
When injured justice crush'd the pride of power,
Spurn'd the thin covering of exterior things,
And dared to punish perjury in kings;
Taught sceptred pride in nearer view to scan
The rights of nature, and the claims of man;
Bade earth's proud Tyrants dread their Country's hate,
And fix'd the base of England's future state.

The acquaintance of Mr. Roscoe with the classical languages was made entirely without instruction from others. Early in life he acquired a knowledge of the Latin language, and had rendered himself familiar with its best writers. Of these Horace and Cicero were his peculiar favourites. Nearly at the same period his attention was directed, by Dr. Aikin, to the study of the Italian poets, who, on the revival of learning, almost rivalled their great models in the beauty of their Latin verse. Although Mr. Roscoe cannot be said to have acquired that refined and critical knowledge of the language, to which in this country so large a portion of time is devoted, or rather sacrificed, he was yet fully capable of tasting and appreciating the higher excellencies of style, as his selections from, and observations upon, the writings of the modern Latin poets sufficiently demonstrate.

With the Greek language Mr. Roscoe did not become acquainted until the middle period of life, when for some time he studied it with much diligence. In this task also he received no as-

sistance, relying entirely on his own method of study. More important avocations prevented him from pursuing these agreeable labours to the extent he desired, and it was only during the interval which elapsed between his relinquishment of business in 1796, and his return to it in 1799, that he was enabled to devote any considerable portion of his leisure time to this object. The language itself had excited his high admiration, and he often adverted with pleasure to the time he had spent in acquiring it. Of his proficiency in it he thus speaks in the following passage, intended to form part of a letter to Dr. Parr: —

" To the abstruser parts of learning, and particularly to the nicer distinctions of the Greek language, I have no pretensions. I have not, indeed, lamented, like Petrarca, over the books of Homer, which remained silent to his ardent entreaties, but my acquaintance with them has been a sort of illicit intercourse, uncontrolled by system, and unsanctioned by authority. Αυτοδιδακτος, and consequently ill taught, it has been my lot to pursue the same system to the present day, and I may say with the philosopher — γεραϛκω δ'αει πολλα διδαϛκομενος."

His acquaintance with the modern languages was confined to the French and the Italian. In the former he conversed with considerable fluency, and of the latter he had acquired an ex-

tensive and critical knowledge. The letters which he occasionally addressed, in that language, to his correspondents in Italy, from which a few specimens have been selected, will give an idea of the spirit and elegance with which he was able to express himself. It would, indeed, have been surprising if, after his long and laborious study of the best writers of Italy, he had not imbibed, in some degree, their genius and their taste. Of his intimate acquaintance with the literature of that country, and more especially of that splendid portion of it which he illustrated by his writings, it is unnecessary to speak. The general estimation in which those works are held, both at home and abroad, bears ample testimony to their merits.

It was chiefly in the earlier part of his life that English literature engaged his attention. With the works of the poets he was particularly conversant; and his memory was stored with many of the most beautiful passages from their writings. Among the elder poets, Chaucer, Shakspeare, and Milton held, in his estimation, their deserved and pre-eminent place. But the writer to whose works he recurred with most pleasure was Pope; whose genius he has vindicated in the dissertation prefixed to the second volume of his Works. Shenstone was the favourite of his youth, and in later life Cowper won his warm admiration. Amongst the poets of his own day, he

was most forcibly struck with the genius of Byron. The poetry of Scott did not interest him greatly; and he did not concur with those who extol so highly the poetical productions of Wordsworth and of Southey. But with one of the writers of the same school he was much delighted; and the "Isle of Palms" was one of his most favourite poems. No writer of modern times affected his feelings more powerfully than Mrs. Hemans. He possessed the rare talent of giving full effect, in reading, to the works of the poets whom he admired.

His general knowledge of botany was more extensive than, considering the great attention which he bestowed upon one particular order of plants, he might be supposed to have possessed. His study of the science had commenced at a very early age, and it never ceased to be the recreation of his leisure hours. He had diligently studied the best botanical works, many of which his library contained; and he frequently figured plants with great freedom and truth, though not with the finished pencil of an artist. Sir James Smith, on his first introduction to him, expressed his surprise at finding him "so good a practical botanist;" and afterwards approved of and adopted his views in the arrangement of the *Scitamineæ*.*

* "Mr. Roscoe, in a most excellent paper to the Linnæan Society, first led the way to a true knowledge of the genera

Like his friend, the illustrious President of the Linnæan Society, he, too, was an ardent disciple of the great Swede, "and defended the Linnæan fortress as stoutly as he could."*

He was also attached to other branches of natural history, but had never devoted much study to them, with the exception of conchology, to which, as appears from some of his papers, he had at one time paid considerable attention.

The attachment of Mr. Roscoe to works of art contributed greatly to his happiness. When fatigued with business, and with the literary employments which generally succeeded to the engagements of the day, he was accustomed to amuse his mind with turning over the leaves of his portfolios,—an occupation which always seemed to beguile his fatigue, and to revive his spirits. His knowledge of art was considerable. In his collections he endeavoured, not merely to bring together beautiful specimens of the pencil or the graver, but to form materials for illustrating the rise and progress of the various branches of art, and thus to form, as it were, a school of art, in which its history might be studied with pleasure and advantage. He freely

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of these difficult plants."— *Sir J. E. Smith to the Rev. Dr. Goodenough.* "*Life of Sir J. Smith,*" vol. i. p. 555.

* Ibid. vol. ii. p. 251.

and gladly threw open his collections, not only for the amusement of his friends, but also for the improvement of the young artists who were desirous of studying the works of the great masters, and who constantly found in him a zealous and steady friend.

The love which he felt himself for intellectual pursuits he delighted to communicate to others; and nothing afforded him higher pleasure than to assist in the establishment of the various literary and scientific institutions, which have, in the course of the last forty years, been founded at Liverpool and in other places. The part which he was known to have taken on these occasions produced many applications to him from quarters where similar institutions were projected, and he thus enjoyed opportunities of extending his usefulness, of which he gladly took advantage. His correspondence on these subjects was not confined to England. The founders of the Botanic Garden at Philadelphia were indebted to him for the plan upon which they proceeded to form their establishment. "With the information which you have had the goodness to give me," says Mr. Short, an American gentleman, "and which I communicated to one or two friends, and particularly to Dr. Barton, our most able botanist, we determined to make an attempt at Philadelphia, towards what you had so happily effected at Liverpool. I made use of your name

and your example to inspire the greater confidence of success in the undertaking, and should it ultimately meet with the necessary support, and be carried into execution, I am persuaded it will owe so much to this circumstance, that you will have a right, Sir, to consider yourself as one of the founders of the establishment."

Similar services were rendered by him in the founding of the Hull Botanic Garden. On this subject he entered into a correspondence with Mr. Spence, of Drypool, who, in a letter dated 13th August, 1811, thus notices the assistance derived from Mr. Roscoe's suggestions: —

"I feel very much indeed indebted to you for your polite attention to my request. I had the pleasure of reading the letter with which you honoured me to a general meeting of the subscribers to our proposed Botanic Garden (Dr. Alderson in the chair), which took place on Friday last, when a vote of thanks to you for your valuable information and friendly offers of assistance was unanimously passed, which I was commissioned to communicate on behalf of the meeting. Your encouragement to proceed, though on a smaller scale than at Liverpool, was of no small service to our cause. Coming from such authority, it at once silenced the few who were disposed to throw cold water on the project, with the plausible objection of the impossibility of our raising any thing like your

funds, and, in consequence, the business of the meeting proceeded with great spirit and unanimity."

The most valuable quality of Mr. Roscoe's mind was the rare and inestimable faculty of generalisation — the power of applying great principles, on a large scale, to all the most important transactions of life. Following out all the leading truths of religion, of morals, and of politics, to their ultimate results, he was able to detect the errors of those who have shaped their schemes of human conduct upon more narrow and confined views. Yet, in upholding only that which was strictly correct in principle, he never abandoned the expedient, being well convinced that Providence has not disjoined the useful from the good, and that the true interests of man can never be served by a deviation from rectitude. These views guided him in safety through every difficulty, giving strength and confidence to all his opinions; and it is from the exhibition of the same principles that his life and his writings must derive their real value.

In reviewing Mr. Roscoe's literary character, it is impossible not to be struck with the sum of exertion which it displays. With the exception of the last few years of it, and of the interval between his abandoning the profession of an attorney, and becoming a partner in the bank, he was incessantly engaged in the management of

an extensive and laborious business, which occupied the whole of his mornings, and frequently of his evenings also. The only time, therefore, which it was in his power to devote to literature, were the evenings not required by his business, and those vacant spaces of time which occur in the course of the busiest day, and which are so often wasted, even by the diligent. By the careful and unremitting use of the leisure thus obtained, he accomplished those extensive literary tasks, which, by common observers, might be supposed to have required the labour of a life. To this industry was added a singular energy of character, which increased in proportion to the calls upon him for exertion, and which seemed unaccountable even to himself. "I know not how it is," he says in a letter to Sir James Smith, "I can never accomplish any thing unless I have a great many other things that call for my attention at the same time, when I am as diligent in what I am about as obstinacy and perseverance can make me. Whether this arises from an attachment one acquires for a particular subject, or from a perversity of disposition, which delights to be employed in any thing but what it ought to be, I shall not venture to determine." Other persons would have concluded that it arose from that energy which is only roused and inspirited by circumstances which would depress

other minds, and is not fully put into action unless under the pressure of difficulties.

The same spirit must be regarded as the instrument of all that he accomplished in other ways; of his continued and resolute exertions in attempting to inculcate his own political opinions, of his constant endeavours to promote education and liberal institutions in his native town, of his ardent labours in penal jurisprudence, of his eager pursuit of botanical science. Each of these objects he prosecuted with a zeal which seemed to engross his whole mind, and by its very ardour to promise success. This active employment of his energies had become so habitual to him, that, instead of being inimical, it appeared to him to be necessary to his health and life. "I rejoice," he says in a letter written in 1826, "in the disposition you feel for the continuation of your labours, it being a strong impression upon my mind, that nothing is more conducive to life and health, than some employment which calls for our continued attention, and prevents a moment from being irksome on our hands. For my own part, I feel as if my existence were twined round my employments, and that, when those have finished, I shall have finished too." The latter years of his life verified this sentiment; when released from his literary engagements, he still found employments

which occupied and delighted his mind to the last.

It is the advice of the Abbé Maury, that in relating the history of an eminent man, the writer should add to the interest of his narrative "by surrounding the subject of it with his contemporaries." Few persons have been more highly favoured than Mr. Roscoe in the possession of a numerous body of intelligent and attached friends, many of whose names have been mentioned in the course of the present narrative. Yet it may not, perhaps, be uninteresting to present in this place a more connected view of those amicable associations, which, while they added so greatly to the happiness of his life, enabled him, at the same time, to perform much, that, unassisted and alone, he could never have accomplished. How sincerely he valued the pleasures of friendship the whole tenor of his correspondence shows; and he has himself expressed this feeling in the following passage of a letter, written, in the decline of life, to Sir James Smith:—"Above all, I delight to preserve and cultivate those feelings of friendship and affection which have been the charm and happiness of my life, and few of which have returned me so ample a harvest as those in which I am at present employed."

In his early youth he was particularly fortunate in the selection of companions whose tastes

and acquirements led him to the cultivation of those intellectual pursuits by which, in his after life, he became so much distinguished. In the society of Francis Holden, of William Clarke, of Robert Rigby, and of the other youthful friends with whom the leisure hours of his early days were passed, he acquired that relish for literary pursuits, which neither the discipline of schools, nor the exhortations of the learned can confer. In their society also he sought and found the pleasures which natural scenery inspires; and their morning studies and evening walks present a pleasing picture of the manner in which their vacant time was employed.

As he grew into manhood, additional friendships were formed, distinguished, no less than those of his youth, by the strength of their ties and the worth of their objects. That mutual interchange of opinion, and that association of mental powers, which had before been directed to individual improvement, had now a higher aim, and Mr. Roscoe and his friends, in maturer life, united their efforts to promote the public good. Amongst those whom he more particularly regarded as his associates in these labours, were Mr. Rathbone, Dr. Currie, and the Rev. William Shepherd; to these names may be added that of the late Edward Rushton, a man of high moral qualities, of great intellectual endowments, and of the most inflexible strength of

principle. In conjunction with these excellent persons he concerted and carried into execution his plans for disseminating, in the community amongst whom he lived, right sentiments upon all questions of public interest; and for opposing the frequent attempts made to mislead the people, by those whose interests or whose prejudices were hostile to the general good. No meeting upon any subject of public importance was held in Liverpool, at which these faithful supporters of the people's cause did not appear, to advocate the interests of the many against those of the few. Nor was it only when the principles of freedom and of a liberal and enlarged policy were popular with the crowd, that they stood forward in their support: upon more than one occasion they maintained the cause of the people's happiness against the voice of the people themselves.

In the promotion of institutions of public utility in his native town, Mr. Roscoe acted not only in conjunction with his own personal friends, but gladly co-operated with all who were willing to lend their assistance. On these occasions he never suffered party feelings to prevent him from combining his efforts with those of others; and all the most useful institutions of the town have been erected by the zeal and resources of individuals of the most varied political sentiments.

As his character became more generally known,

the number of his political friends was much extended; and he had the happiness to secure the regard of some of the most estimable and distinguished persons of his day. With the late Marquis of Lansdowne he enjoyed a long and very confidential correspondence on political subjects. With the Duke of Gloucester he corresponded, not only on the subject of the slave trade and the abolition of slavery, but upon various questions of public interest. He was in the habit also of communicating upon political subjects with Lord Holland, Lord Erskine, Sir Samuel Romilly, Mr. Brougham, Mr. Whitbread, Sir James Mackintosh, Mr. William Smith, Sir Philip Francis, and many others of the active supporters of liberal principles in both houses of parliament. If amongst these excellent persons there was any one for whom he entertained a superior respect and a higher esteem, it was Mr. Whitbread, whose principles seemed to accord more nearly with his own than those of any other of his friends. Though he had been personally introduced to Mr. Fox, he had unfortunately no opportunity of cultivating the friendship of that consummate statesman. Had such an opportunity been afforded, there can be little doubt that the character of Mr. Roscoe would have won the warm and lasting esteem of Mr. Fox.

The exertions of Mr. Roscoe in the abolition of the slave trade, in the reformation of crimi-

nals, and in other philanthropic objects, procured him a new band of friends. Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Clarkson, Mr. William Allen, Mr. Macaulay, and Mr. Basil Montagu were connected with him by this bond. In the decline of life he acquired the friendship of many excellent persons in the United States, by his writings on prison discipline, and by the deep interest he displayed in the progress of the penitentiary system in America.

But it was to his literary character that Mr. Roscoe owed the greatest number of his friends. Having first admired him as an author, they afterwards learned to love him as a man.* To enumerate all the friends whom his literary reputation created would be to name nearly all the most distinguished men of his day.

Of his extensive correspondence on literary subjects, it is impossible in the present narrative to give any thing like an adequate idea. It includes the names of Lord Orford, Lord Carlisle, Lord Holland, Rogers, Campbell, Sotheby,

* "An innate love of sincerity and truth; simplicity combined with a playful vivacity, yet suavity of manners; a generous belief in the integrity of others, the consequence of his own rectitude of purpose; an anxiety to do justice to the merits of others; a liberal and judicious patronage of modest talent struggling to escape from obscurity, joined to a natural cheerfulness of disposition; all united to convert into devoted and enthusiastic admirers those who first sought his friendship from his literary reputation."—*Dr. Traill's Memoir.*

Montgomery, Professor Wilson, Hogg, Charles Lloyd, Hector Macneill, the Rev. James Graham, Mr. Bernard Barton, Dr. Symmons, Dr. Parr, Dr. Aikin, Charles Butler, Dr. Dibdin, the Rev. W. P. Greswell; Miss Aikin, Miss Edgeworth, Mrs. Barbauld, Mrs. Wolstoncraft, and many others.*

One person there was, who, in the latter part of Mr. Roscoe's life, may almost be said to have stood alone in his regard, and his attachment for whom partook of all the enthusiasm which distinguishes youthful affection. The character of Mr. Coke was no sooner known to him than it won his warmest admiration. His sincerity and manly frankness, his ardent love of liberty, the consistent tenor of his long public life, his attachment to agricultural pursuits, his open hospitality, and his truly friendly heart, were qualities which could not fail to attract Mr. Roscoe's regard. He seldom spoke of him

* To Sir Walter Scott Mr. Roscoe was, unfortunately, only known by a short but very interesting interview, in the year 1823, at the house of Mr. Thomas Campbell. He was much struck with the appearance and animated conversation of that celebrated man, and often recurred with pleasure to the circumstance of their meeting. With Mr. Southey, Mr. Wordsworth, and Mr. Coleridge, his acquaintance was imperfect, nor was it kept up by letter. Jeremy Bentham was one of the few very distinguished men with whom Mr. Roscoe was not so fortunate as to have had any intercourse.

without some epithet demonstrative of his respect and affection; and the long labour which he underwent in arranging and cataloguing the Holkham manuscripts, became a source of the highest pleasure to him, from the consciousness that he was serving and gratifying the friend whom he loved. These feelings of affection and respect were warmly returned on the part of Mr. Coke, who neglected no opportunity of manifesting his regard for Mr. Roscoe, and who conferred upon him obligations of no ordinary nature.

The constant resort of intelligent foreigners to the house of Mr. Roscoe was a striking testimony to the estimation in which his character was held abroad, and afforded him many opportunities, by the friendships which these casual visits often created, of extending, in other lands, the influence of his principles and opinions. Men of science and of letters, from Italy, from Germany*, and from France, seldom visited the

* « An Englishman would not readily forgive me, if, when speaking of Liverpool, I were to pass over altogether in silence the banker William Roscoe. His histories of 'Lorenzo de' Medici' and of 'Pope Leo X.' have procured him general consideration in the British empire. In Liverpool he is distinguished as the patriot and the man of taste. A stranger who has an introduction to him may certainly esteem himself very fortunate; but the polite hospitalities of the merchants of Liverpool gave me but too few opportunities of

northern parts of England without bearing with them an introduction to him; nor did he hesitate, on these occasions, to devote a portion of his valuable time to their service, promoting, to the utmost of his power, the objects of their visit. Still more numerous were the introductions which were brought to him by travellers from the United States, with a great number of whom he afterwards maintained a friendly correspondence. Amongst those to whom he thus became personally known, were President Monroe, Dr. Channing, Mr. Jared Sparks, Mr. Verplanck, Judge Jackson, the Rev. W. P. Greenwood, Professor Norton, Dr. Kirkland, Professor Silliman, Mr. Everett, Mr. Christopher Hughes, Mr. Audubon, the late Bishop Hobart, and others.

In addition to these there were many distinguished foreigners, with whom Mr. Roscoe's intercourse was only by letter. With the principal scholars of Italy he thus maintained an occasional communication; and amongst his correspondents in that country are to be found the learned names of Fabroni, Bandini, Morelli, Moreni, Bossi, Mecherini, and others. But the person whose correspondence he most highly esteemed,

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availing myself of the kind invitations of this excellent man." — *P. A. Nemnich's Neueste Reise durch England, Schottland, und Ireland. Tubingen.* 1807.

and with whom he regarded it as an honour to communicate, was M. La Fayette. His other correspondents in France were not numerous.

His attachment to botany and to agricultural pursuits procured him the friendship of Sir James Edward Smith, Sir Joseph Banks, Sir John Sinclair, Dr. Wallich, Dr. Carey of Calcutta, Dr. Maton, Dr. Hooker, the Hon. W. Herbert, Lord Mountnorris, Mr. Colebrooke, Mr. Lambert, and other scientific persons. It would be unjust to omit in this place the name of Mr. John Shepherd, the excellent and intelligent curator of the Botanical Garden at Liverpool, in whose agreeable society Mr. Roscoe took great pleasure, and who was indefatigable in assisting him in his botanical pursuits. To Mr. Henry Shepherd, also, the sub-curator of the same establishment, he was under great obligations, for the friendly services rendered by him in the publication of the Monandrian plants.

As the friendship of the distinguished and exalted persons whose regard he had won, was acquired by no unworthy arts or mean compliances, so it was never made use of by Mr. Roscoe for any sordid or selfish ends. From the rank, the wealth, or the influence of his friends, he never looked for benefits either to himself or his family; but, on the contrary, he scrupulously refrained from taking advantage of those oppor-

tunities of personal advancement, which his situation and connections not unfrequently afforded him. He found the reward of this disinterested spirit in the confidence which marked the intercourse of his friends, in the absence of all feeling of constraint from obligations received or desired, and in the generous consciousness that his views and aims rendered him not unworthy of the friendship which he cultivated.

In society Mr. Roscoe displayed a cheerfulness and vivacity, which, coupled with the courtesy of his manners, rendered his conversation very generally acceptable. He expressed himself with much force and fluency, and entered with eagerness into the passing topics of the day, as well as into those graver discussions in which he felt so sincere an interest. Though he frequently took a prominent and decided part in conversation, it was not the result of an exaggerated idea of his self-consequence, but the effect of that natural ardour which distinguished him on all occasions. The benevolence of his heart led him to treat with kindness and observance the feelings of all; and the humblest person in company received, in proportion to his claims, the same courtesy and deference as the most distinguished. It was this spirit of social impartiality and justice, which rendered him so popular in society; and which

left so pleasing an impression upon the minds of those with whom he associated. The simplicity which characterised his mind distinguished his manners also; and there have probably been few persons of any celebrity, in whose demeanour less consciousness of their station appeared.

The picture of Mr. Roscoe's life would be very imperfect, unless it represented him as he appeared in the society of his family, and in the numerous endearing relations of private life; and yet, when that picture is traced by one whose chief happiness was derived from these sources, it will be difficult to persuade others that it has not been overcoloured. Of his character as a husband something has already been said;—of his never-failing affection and goodness to his children, none but those children can judge; and to such feelings it is difficult to give expression. The attachment, gratitude, and respect, with which every member of his family regarded him, were occasionally manifested in the language which he loved; and some of these memorials of filial attachment are now introduced, to record, however faintly, the feelings which gave birth to them.

The following sonnet was addressed to him by one of his sons, soon after the publication of "Lorenzo de' Medici:"—

SONNET.

Stay thy o'ershadowing wings, relentless Time!
Nor shade those auburn locks with falling grey,
That o'er my father's frownless forehead stray,
Graceful and fair, as in youth's golden prime.
Stay thy rude hand; and he through many a clime
Shall teach thee to retrace thy distant way,
To the bright regions of historic day;
Or he shall charm thee with prophetic rhyme,
Swept from the strings of Freedom's holy lyre;
Or call the Muses from the Ausonian land,
And with the strains their breathing lips inspire,
Win thy cold ear, and check thy ebbing sand!
Vain is my prayer!—already o'er my sire
Thou, ruthless Power! hast stretch'd thine iron hand.

Mr. Roscoe had adopted, on his seal, the motto of Lorenzo de' Medici, "*Stassi il lauro lieto,*" with the emblem of the laurel. In allusion to this legend, the following sonnet was addressed to him by another of his sons in the year 1816:—

SONNET.

Favour'd beyond each tree of field or grove,
Glad and for ever green the laurel stands;
Not to be pluck'd but by heroic hands,
And sacred to the majesty of Jove.
No lightning flash may smite it from above,
No whirlwinds rend it from its rooted bands;
Obedient to their Master's high commands,
They spare the chosen plant he deigns to love.
So, 'midst the tumults of this mortal state,
Whilst thunders burst around and storms assail,
The good man stands with mind and brow serene;
In cloud or sunshine still inviolate;
Confiding in a trust that cannot fail,
A sacred laurel, glad and ever green.

But it was from the pen of one of his daughters that these effusions most freely flowed, and were most warmly welcomed. No anniversary of his birthday passed without its due and accustomed offering from her hand,—that hand which ministered with devoted tenderness to the infirmities of his age.

SONNET.

Full seventy years, my father, on thy head
Have shower'd their aged honours; yet thy sun
Is bright and fresh as when it first begun,
And on th' admiring world its influence shed.
O! long, and glad, and genial be its light,
And calm and blessed be its setting ray;
For thou hast in the labour of the day
Obey'd thy Master's call; and in the right
Thy voice was ever heard, from youth's green prime;
And foremost was thy bosom in the strife,
For all the good that can ennoble life,
Against oppression, tyranny, and crime:
Yes! freedom, virtue, and the good man's fame
Shall to the world descend with ROSCOE's name.

In his habits Mr. Roscoe was temperate, and was attentive to the regular observance of domestic arrangements. He did not rise unusually early, and the periods he devoted to study were those which remained after concluding the more serious labours of the day. He had no stated times set apart for his studies, which were often carried on in the midst of his family. He was seldom in the habit of intrenching upon the

hours devoted to sleep. Even to the latest period of life, he usually enjoyed undisturbed repose. Though never in the possession of robust health, he very seldom suffered from severe illness; and few persons, during a long life, have been more exempt from pain. He was accustomed to take exercise frequently both on foot and on horseback, and felt a particular enjoyment in country occupations. He had few amusements beyond those which his usual employments afforded; or which he derived from the cultivation of his garden, and the contemplation of his prints and drawings. He took no pleasure in field sports, and other similar pursuits. In his youth he had a taste for theatrical performances, but in after-life he seldom entered into public amusements. From music he derived but little pleasure, although he was a great admirer of the works of Handel. To the latest period of his life Mr. Roscoe never disregarded the proprieties of dress and of manners. His personal appearance is thus described by his friend Dr. Traill:—

"In person Mr. Roscoe was tall, and rather slender. In early life he possessed much bodily activity. His hair was light auburn, almost inclining to red; his full grey eye was clear and mild; his face expressive and cheerful. As he advanced in life the benevolent expression of his countenance remained; but the vivacity of the

features was tempered into a noble dignity, which it was impossible to see without respect and admiration; while the mouth bespoke taste and feeling, and the clustering hoary hair round his temples gave a venerable air to his manly features." *

Various representations of him have been given to the public, and others exist in the possession of his family and friends. The portrait prefixed to the first of the present volumes, painted about the year 1791, by Williamson, an artist of considerable ability at Liverpool, presents a very pleasing idea of him at this period of his life, and has been selected to illustrate this work from its not having been before engraved. The profile at the commencement of the second volume is from the medallion executed by John Gibson in the year 1813, and is generally esteemed the best representation of him in later life. Three busts of him, by the same artist, exist: the marble bust already mentioned, executed for Mr. Watson Taylor, and now in the possession of Mr. Joseph Strutt of Derby; the marble bust presented by Gibson to the Liverpool Royal Institution; and a small bust modelled by him previously to his leaving England, from which many casts have been taken. Other busts have also been modelled,

* Dr. Traill's Memoir.

amongst which those by Spence, an artist of Liverpool, have been considered by many as exhibiting a strong likeness.

About the year 1822 Mr. Roscoe, at the request of his friend Mr. Coke, sat for his portrait to Sir Martin Archer Shee; and the picture, a whole length, now ornaments the Manuscript Library at Holkham. At the solicitation, also, of several of his friends at Liverpool, he was painted by Lonsdale, in the year 1825; and the picture was presented to the Liverpool Royal Institution. From this painting an engraving has been published. Two miniatures of him, by Haughton and Hargreaves, — the former in the possession of Mrs. M'Creery, and the latter of Mr. Coke, — have also been engraved. They represent him a little beyond the middle period of life.

Several notices* of Mr. Roscoe appeared, soon after his death, in the public prints and in various periodical works, of which by far the most interesting and authentic is that published by Dr. Traill, in the Twenty-sixth Number of "The Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal," from which many valuable passages have been extracted in the course of the present work.

* See Appendix, No. III.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

THE following notice, on the subject of Mr. Roscoe's Monument, appeared, shortly after his death, in one of the Liverpool newspapers:—

"THE FIRST NOTICE OF A MONUMENT TO ROSCOE.

"The grave has just closed over the remains of the most distinguished individual among us, and centuries may revolve before this place shall again produce a name so celebrated and illustrious as that of Roscoe. We have loved him; we have honoured him; we have valued his literary fame as our own; we have been proud of the distinction he secured to his native town, not only throughout England, but among nations. The learned of all countries have heard with surprise that Liverpool, once only known for its enormous commercial wealth, and its local and political importance, has given birth to the most distinguished of the historians of Europe; and that, from this great mercantile city, as from a second Florence, have issued works which have shed light upon the most important era in the annals of Italy, and which have illustrated the progress of the arts and of literature throughout all countries and all ages.

"Here he has lived and here he has died: here he commenced his literary labours, and pursued and perfected his historical researches. 'Whatever his hand found to do' has been accomplished; he has gone from us in the fulness of his days, and in the unalienated possession of his faculties: decay had touched him gently, had spared the fine qualities of his imagination and his heart; and the poem which he prefixed to the last of his works that issued from the press is marked with all the vigour of the maturity of genius. His long and useful life has been spent among those who loved him and those who honoured him; who would have valued his affectionate disposition, his lofty disinterestedness and independence, his fearless sincerity, and the pure and almost patriarchal simplicity of his character, if they had not been united to a mind capable of the most extensive, the most elevated views, if they had not been combined with the most brilliant literary attainments.

"We possess him no more, a treasure to our hearts and our society; we can no longer show him to our children as one whose name is to live when those of all around him are forgotten; we can no longer present him with pride to strangers of the highest rank and most distinguished celebrity; who were all, of whatever class, or sect, or country, unanimous in their desire to show respect to the moral worth and extended literary reputation of Roscoe.

"He is gone from among us; but let us be the first to offer some tribute to his name; to raise some memorial to the fame which will be awarded to him by the voices of thousands and the suffrages of nations. The meed assigned to his literary celebrity may be safely intrusted to surrounding countries and succeeding generations: let ours be the heartfelt testimony that may be paid by respect and affection; now, while his noble and vener-

able image still bends before us, while the gracious and benevolent expression of his features is still present to us, while the remembrance of his mild worth and unassuming excellence is still vividly impressed upon our memories and our hearts.

"Let those, then, who knew him and loved him, assist in raising this memorial; let the humblest of his friends (and who ever had so many amid all classes and conditions among us?) be invited to offer their contributions. Let the erection of this monument be intrusted to one whom he loved, whose early talents he fostered, whose singular and perfect success in one of the noblest of the arts he was so proud to contemplate — to John Gibson; and to whom more efficient or more distinguished could it be assigned, even if he had not been the favourite of Roscoe and the pupil of Canova? if he had not been born in our town, and entitled to claim from us every recompense, every distinction which liberality and munificence can award to genius?

"The remains of our beloved fellow-citizen have been committed to a humble grave: he sleeps reunited to those he loved best in life; and the place of his rest has been assigned to him by feelings of filial love and affection too pure and too sacred to be blended for a moment with any thought of fame or distinction; but it is in the centre of our beautiful cemetery that a memorial of him will be sought by the traveller and stranger; it is near the relics of the most distinguished and lamented of those who rest among us, even near the grave of Huskisson, that must be raised the monument of Roscoe.

"L.

"July 15th, 1831."

No. II.

THE following letters, selected from a number of others, relating to various applications made to Mr. Roscoe for advice and assistance, are of so original a character, that the perusal of them cannot fail to amuse the reader.

The first letter must excite a feeling of no inconsiderable interest for the fate of the writer:—

"Honoured Sir,

"Knowing you to be a friend to those who are unjustly oppressed, and as a calamity is now threatened me, which will most certainly fall upon me, unless by your timely interference it is warded off, I have flown to you as a sure refuge and protector.

"Without premising further, my trouble is as follows:—It is my misfortune to have a father who is a rigid Roman Catholic. I have also been brought up to the same religion, but I don't like it. My mother is dead; she was a Protestant. My father has lately discovered I had been to a Protestant church frequently; and he told me, on Thursday evening, for so doing, he would send me on board a man of war; and that he considered he should be doing God a good service by banishing a heretic for ever from his friends and country; that for his part he was so firm, he would die for the Catholic cause.

"O Sir! you are a man of knowledge and experience; and you must know how I am circumstanced from what I have said. I cannot express my trouble to you; for

as I have a great desire to signalise myself in trade, and have pryed into that knowledge which is essential to a merchant; and as I am utterly averse to either army or navy, should my father succeed in his design, all my hopes in this world would be for ever blasted.

"I thought he was prompted to say what he did through passion; but I find (though not from himself, for he keeps it secret,) that he was yesterday (Friday) at a rendezvous house, and has actually engaged some of the press-gang to take me by surprise. I must also inform you, that, in consequence of the failure of a mercantile house in this town, I am now out of employment; but I am now engaging with a Portuguese house, in this town, to go out to the Brazils, there to remain, in the capacity of book-keeper.

"O Sir! if you will but protect me from so unjust a doom that I am menaced with, I will constantly offer up my prayers for your happiness.

"I will say no more, but conclude by hoping you will pardon the liberty I have taken; for I have been emboldened through hearing of your many acts of greatness, and which redounds eternal honour to you.

"P. S. Advise me, if you please, how to act."

Amongst those who solicited his literary advice and assistance, was the writer of the ensuing letter:—

"Kind Sir i take this oportunity of wrighting to you being advised by a Ladey of Liverpool to do so in order to tell you i am a Brittich Sailor that as Lateley arived in England after aving maid moy escaape from the Cost of New Zeland ware i was ten years a prisner and is Most beautifull tatued over the face and bodey, and as wrote a manuscript of every think Consirning the interior of New Zeland, the wars, Mariges, Berings, and

the Discriptions of every Animals of Birds Beasts and Reptiles and Menney others of the South Sceas, the Manuscript is valuable and wold make a Book of 200 Pages wrote by a good Editor being such enformation as Never yet being in print not aving the menes of printing it moy Self i wish to Dispose of it and being advised to wright to you Concerning it i shold wish for you to send me a note wether i must atend at your house or whether you will whait on me at Mr. Calvert's Exibition in the Market Liverpool where the are exibiting me as a curiosity your obedunt Sirvent

"JOHN ROTHERFOOT."

The following letter, displaying rather more scholarship than that of the New Zealand traveller, is no less remarkable in its way:—

"O tu, vir illustrissime, note quamvis mihi famâ tantum virtutum, et lectione librorum tuorum, tibi clamo, opem petens ex faucibus averni. Ob trigenta et quinque libras incarceratus pereo. Semper pessimum malorum incarcerationem duxi; semper stabilissimâ mente statui, propriâ me manu ab isto malo, si unquam mihi accederit, memet liberaturum."—"Tametsi re angustissimâ domi a primâ pueritiâ implicitus, ad doctrinam nihilominus haud vulgarem αυτοδιδακτος perveni. Semper cum fortunâ bellum gessi, internecionem vereor, et illa victoriâ evadet. Pater meus mortuus est—mater superstes, cujus solæ sum ego divitiæ, sola voluptas, sola spes. Si ipse in carcere maneam, illa morietur. Sed non manebo. Ipse, ipse me solvam, omni alio deficiente auxilio."—"Multa pro te facere possum. Codices Græcos, Latinos, Italicos exarabo; libros evolvam; auctoritates colligam. Nihil est quod ferre aut facere recusem, modo ex hac rerum inquinatarum sentinâ et

colluvie me in libertatem vitamque vindices. Nam libertas et vita unum idemque mihi. Responsum tuum, aut vitæ aut mortis nuncium certissimum, anxius expecto. O serva me, te obsecro; non vilem animam s., averis."

Amongst the many singular events in which Mr. Roscoe was called upon to bear a part, was one of great delicacy, the general outline of which may be gathered from the following letter. The young and accomplished lady to whom it was, nearly half a century ago, addressed, was indebted to Mr. Roscoe and his family for services of no ordinary kind, rendered under circumstances of peculiar difficulty:—

"Madam,

"As I have been unexpectedly led to take an interest in your concerns, I trust my addressing a few lines to you will not be thought impertinent. The commission intrusted to me was not a voluntary one on my part, and was only intended to suit the present occasion; but I should think I had ill discharged my duty were I to suffer you to return without endeavouring, as far as in my power, to promote your future happiness. Whatever may be the result, the motive is surely excusable. Though a stranger, I cannot but feel for the peculiarity of your situation; deprived of those relatives who would have been your protection, you have confided your happiness to others. It is a heavy misfortune to be friendless, but a still heavier to mistake an enemy for a friend: that this has been your lot I greatly suspect, and sincerely wish I may be mistaken in the supposition.

"Before I proceed farther give me leave to say, once for all, that your own situation was the sole inducement with me to interfere on your account, and not any recommendation from any person. The commission was

not, indeed, personally to me, as I have not the pleasure of your friend's acquaintance; but I cheerfully accepted it, and am happy it has hitherto been favourable — whatever I can do further on your account I will willingly comply with; but the idea that your friend had the most distant right to expect a compliance with a request of this kind is not pleasing to me, and I have therefore thought it necessary to place this matter in its proper light.

"In some of the short conversations we have had on your concerns, you will possibly have thought my enquiries might proceed from an idle curiosity; but I trust they sprung from a better motive. Was it possible for a man of any feeling to know so much of your history as you have thought proper to intrust me with, and not be deeply interested on your account? With family, with fortune, with accomplishments which promise more than a common share of happiness to their possessor, is it possible to stand by and see them become useless, or, rather, perverted into the means of misery, without one endeavour to prevent it? To be silent on such an occasion would be to become accessary to your ruin. In making an attempt to serve you, I have nothing to fear from any of the parties concerned; but from your prudence and good sense I have much to hope, that the language of truth, though from the pen of a stranger, will not be without its effect.

"I will candidly own my questions were directed to obtain information, whether the unfortunate event we were speaking of was the result of an attachment in which your heart was engaged, or not, and whether it was probable the evil might be speedily remedied by a union with some person whose future attention might in some degree compensate you for the danger and distress you have suffered on his account; but on this point no light

was thrown; and possibly, as this was foreign to the business on which we met, you might not think this subject alluded to.

"In what I have to say I must, therefore, proceed on supposition; only leaving it to yourself to apply it, in case any observations I may make should have a reference to your situation.

"Give me leave, then, Madam, to express my wonder and astonishment, that in your rank of life, with your fortune and endowments, any man, whatever his quality might be, who had so far engaged your affections, should have chosen to contribute to your destruction and disgrace, rather than to your true interest and happiness. From what has happened, I am almost authorised to suppose you would have honoured him with your hand. Could he refuse it? Whatever his pretence might be, rest assured he is not only undeserving of your confidence and esteem, but merits your contempt and aversion. Avoid him more than death; for depend upon it you are a sacrifice to his gratification; that instead o being your friend, he is your most unpardonable enemy, and pursues his selfish aims, at the risk of every thing that is dear and honourable to you in life. To see him again would be a circumstance of regret; but, still more, to listen to him, even so far as to give him an opportunity of apology for that which cannot possibly admit of apology, would be a degradation of which I cannot think you capable. Relax from your resolution of eternally discarding him, and you are lost for ever.

"But perhaps your heart may feel an attachment, against which reason and argument are of little avail. Love, it is said, is involuntary. I should, however, suppose (and, as a married man, I may be allowed to have had some experience), that the passion of love at least expects mutuality; and that it must be an un-

accountable disposition that could continue to love after unequivocal proofs had been given of the unworthiness of the object. Now, if there be in nature a monster to be avoided and dreaded beyond all others, it is the person who, under the sacred names of love and of friendship, inflicts a wound which he has neither inclination nor ability to heal. To love such a being is not only unaccountable, but preposterous; it is a prostitution of body and of mind which nothing can excuse. To be deceived is sometimes the lot of the wisest and best of mankind; but to remain enchanted by hypocrisy after she has dropped the mask, is a degree of culpability which can only be accounted for by a total extinction of every principle of goodness.

"I should be happy to think that these remarks are not in any degree applicable to your situation. Perhaps your future prospects in life are more favourable than, from want of information, they appear to me; and a short time may place you in a happy and respectable situation with a person deserving your esteem. If that be the case, you will have the goodness to consider this as a well-meant, though mistaken attempt to be serviceable to you in a point of the highest importance.

"Supposing, then, that there is some ground for my apprehensions (without which my letter may be considered as blank paper), give me leave to suggest to you a few considerations which may possibly assist you in your future conduct. That any further connection can subsist between you and the author of your misfortune, whoever he may be, I will not believe. But your unprotected situation, an attention to your character, a regard to your helpless infant, and, perhaps, other considerations, will still require no small degree of prudence and fortitude. In these, however, you have shown you are not deficient; and I am convinced that, by directing

them properly, you will surmount your difficulties. What more particularly strikes me is as follows:—

"If the person alluded to be resident in your neighbourhood, assert your own dignity, and immediately end all connection, at whatever risk it may be. Have no apprehension that the real object of your journey here may by these means be known. Your conduct in spurning your deceiver from you will, even in that case, exculpate you from the disgrace in the eyes of the world, and place it where it ought to rest.

"Attach yourself, as much as circumstances will admit, to your relatives and some of the most respectable of your friends; and whilst you remain at your house, never be without their company.

"Make a confidant of some person of worth of your own sex, in whom you can confide; this will be an inexpressible relief to your mind, and will probably preserve you from many dangers.

"Consider whether it would not be more advisable to fix your residence in some large town—as London, or Bath. A country residence cannot be favourable to you. But, above all, let me most earnestly advise you to accept of some of those offers of a connection for life, which, I am convinced, will be made to you. On this head I have only one thing to say. Never live in apprehension that your husband may discover a secret; never entertain the consciousness that you have in any manner misled him. The constant and habitual practice of deception will embitter your life and degrade your mind. An avowal of this transaction before marriage would, I confess, operate differently on different men; but it will be a test of affection, and his love of you and your sincerity will be the best pledges of your future happiness.

"May I be allowed, before I conclude, to request you

will call to mind who you are, from whom you are descended, and to whom you are accountable. Possessed, in point of fortune, of whatever you can wish, you are the absolute mistress of your own conduct. Let no person control you till you think proper publicly to authorise him; and consider all attempts to interfere with your property or your actions, as a web spread for your destruction. You had the misfortune of losing your father whilst you were young; you have lately lost a brother, who, had he lived a short time longer, might have been your guardian and protector; — but think! had they been spared to this day, how would their spirits have been roused against the author of your indignity! What *they* would have felt on such an occasion it is *your* duty to feel; and be assured, the false step you have taken is yet retrievable, and that there is an immense difference between an unpremeditated error and a wilful continuance in guilt.

"Let me then once more entreat you, Madam, if there be any veneration due to your lost relatives; if there be any respect of family and connections; if there be any thing honourable in female conduct; or any choice between innocence and guilt, lasting happiness or eternal misery,—to exert every power of your mind to disengage yourself from a connection which has already so deeply injured you, and which, if continued, can only prey upon your spirits, injure your health, impair your future hopes, and inevitably expose you to the pity or contempt of those who, with infinitely less advantages in every respect, have either resisted, or not experienced, the dangers to which you have been exposed.

"That a determined resolution of correcting the errors of your present conduct may be a consolation to your mind, and may accompany you, like a good angel, on your long and fatiguing journey; and that God may

give you prudence to judge what is for your true happiness, and strength of mind to attain it, is the very sincere wish of, Madam," &c.

No. III.

THE following character of Mr. Roscoe was introduced by the Hon. G. C. Verplanck, of New York, in a lecture delivered by him on the opening of a new institution for the encouragement of literature and science in that city:—

"I cannot refrain from adding to these memorable examples in the two most modern of the sciences, another, of eminence in literature, gained under similar circumstances. It is one that, whilst it illustrates my argument, affords me a most fitting occasion to pay a passing tribute to the memory of a venerable friend, the late William Roscoe of Liverpool. He has long ago received the richer offering of American eulogy. The praise which Washington Irving has bestowed upon him*, as a scholar and a gentleman, must be familiar to most of you. With his accustomed graceful and polished eloquence of style, he has painted Roscoe as having almost created his own mind, springing up and forcing its way through a thousand obstacles; as self-prompted, self-sustained, and almost self-educated; conquering every obstacle, and making his own road to fame and fortune; and, after becoming one of the ornaments of the nation, turning the whole force of his talents and

* Sketch Book.

influence to advance and embellish his native town. He has pointed out 'his private life as peculiarly worthy the attention of the citizens of our young and busy country, where literature and the elegant arts must grow up side by side with the coarse plants of daily necessity, and must depend for their culture, not on the exclusive devotion of time or wealth, but on hours and seasons snatched from the pursuits of worldly interests, by intelligent and public-spirited individuals.'

"He has alluded to the dignity with which Roscoe sustained the reverses of fortune in his old age, and the solace he then found in the company of those much loved associates, whom his muse has hailed as the 'teachers of wisdom, chiefs of elder art.'

"To the justice or the beauty of Irving's eulogy in these regards I could add nothing; but it was my own good fortune to have viewed Roscoe under yet another aspect.

"The circumstance of my having, as a member of the legislature of this state, been officially engaged upon the improvement of the penitentiary system, which subject had attracted much of Mr. Roscoe's attention, led to the renewal of a slight personal acquaintance that I had formed with him several years before, and to a correspondence that lasted till his death. I can bear testimony to the philanthropic zeal with which he entered into the examination of that and of every question of improvement on this side of the Atlantic; to the warm interest he took in every thing that concerned the cause of civil and religious liberty, of education, and of humanity; to his zeal, his courage, and his unwearied efforts in promoting the success of all of them.

"As teaching by his own example and by his writings the value of a union of commerce with intellectual pursuits; as showing, by his life, how they may be made to

harmonise, and benefit each other; as the founder of the Athenæum of Liverpool, upon which this and similar establishments in America were modelled,—we may most justly regard him as one of the fathers of this institution. Such, I am sure, would have been his own feeling toward it. He would have joyed over the advantages that it now affords to the youth of New York, with a truly paternal fondness.

"He died during last summer, at the venerable age of eighty years; retaining to the very last his activity of mind, his love of letters, and his zeal for the service of mankind. His death was mourned, by the intelligent and the good of Great Britain, as a public loss. Upon us, too, his memory has claims. I have therefore thought that this place, and the occasion of opening a course of varied instruction, before a commercial audience of New York, demanded this public tribute to the talents and worth of WILLIAM ROSCOE."

THE END.

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